IronWatch

NOVEMBER 2016 | ISSUE 51

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ABYSSAL TIDINGS

A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome back to another thrilling issue of IRONWATCH Magazine!

This month marked the Star Saga Kickstarter, which saw an awesome success of $410,198 raised with 3,000 backers! The campaign saw the development of an array of Nameless monsters and new Mercenaries to use in your games, as well as great deals on Minion packs and tons of cool, 3D scenery. If you've got some awesome campaigns, scenarios, and units you've made, we'd love to feature them in an article in a future IRONWATCH issue.

We always are looking for more awesome content, so if you've got images of models, pictures of games you've played, or articles and stories you've written, let us know and we'd be very interested in putting it in a future Ironwatch issue! Also keep an eye out this month for Mantic's NaNoWriMo prompt opening, as they'll be providing prompts and background information to write your own 10-page story in one of those settings.

Lastly, we're now working with an editorial board, as seen on the Contributor page. I'd like to give a big shout out to these folks, as they've helped make sure the polish on this month's issue is simply outstanding. Thanks for reading, and Welcome to the Watch!

-Austin

Cover art by Boris Samec
Title art by Mark Peasley

Contact us and submit articles at:
ironwatchmagazine@gmail.com

If you find any errors, grammar mistakes, or rule imbalances, please contact us on the Mantic Forums (Look for the discussion labeled "Ironwatch Issue X Feedback") and let us know what we could do to improve your fan-produced magazine. If you are interested in writing, illustrating, or editing for our magazine, please let us know on the feedback discussion as well so you can get in on the action!

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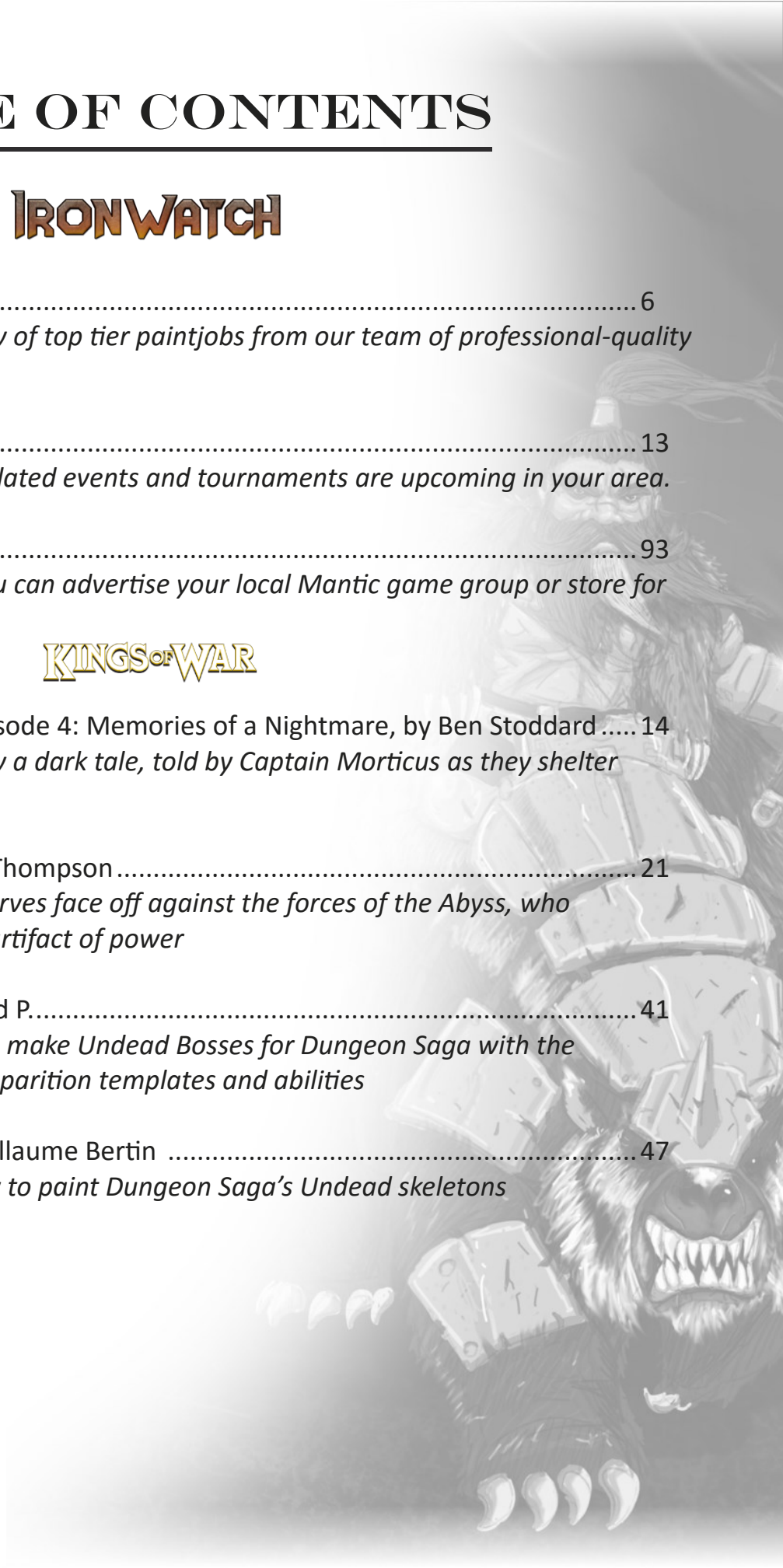

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Boz provides a list of GCPS units you can use in your own games of Deadzone

THE IRON FORGE

Welcome back to the Iron Forge.

On display this month for you we have:

- Cedric Boudoya, and set of stunning Deadzone Peacekeepers, DOG Drone, and even an enormous Plague Aberration
- Marcel Popik, and his superb Deadzone Forgefather Steel Warriors against Plague Zombies

Keep tuned in next month for more fantastic models, and if you have some painted Mantic minis you'd like featured to possibly become an Iron Forge artist, please email high resolution photos of your miniatures to ironwatchmagazine@gmail.com.

Please include your name and/or Mantic forum name. You can also provide descriptions of your paint jobs and titles if you'd like!

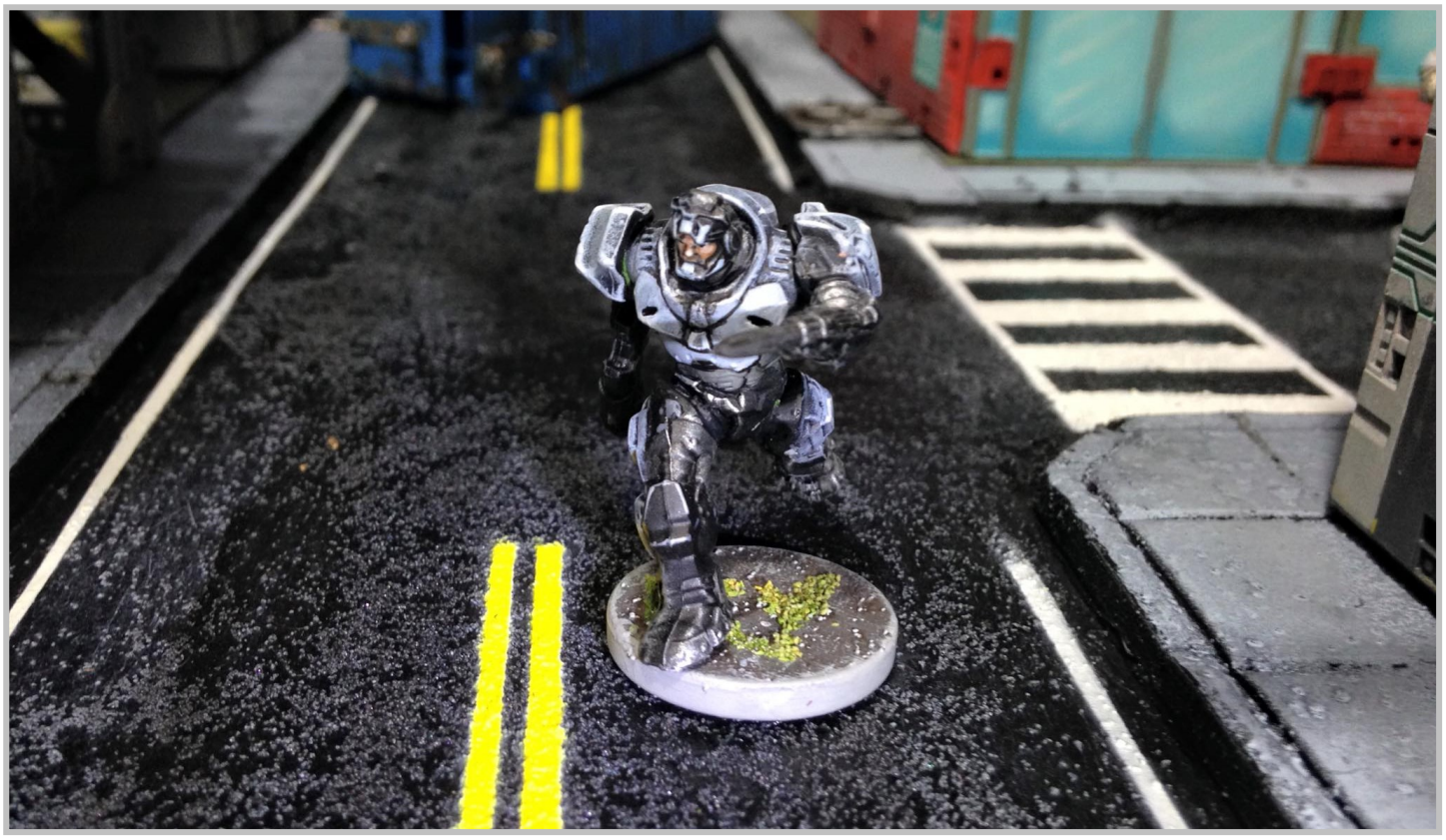
Dwarf King by Claudia Zuminich

Undead Wraiths by Chris Schlumpberger

CEDRIC BOUDOYA

CEDRIC BOUDOYA

CEDRIC BOUDOYA



CEDRIC BOUDOYA

MARCEL POPIK

MARCEL POPIK

MANTIC CALENDAR

If you have Mantic-related events or tournaments you'd like to add, please PM Matt Gilbert or Austin Peasley on the forums or **email us** with your event's date, time, location, cost, a brief description, and a URL for more information.

Please note that this list is not exhaustive and indicates where Mantic games are being enjoyed, not necessarily where Mantic will be making an official appearance (Save for the Mantic HQ, of course).

You might have noticed there's nothing here! We rely on the Mantic Calendar for events, so please either coordinate your event there or let us know directly if you have an event you'd like to have featured on the monthly Calendar!

Deadzone Marauders by "Boston Miniatures"

Basilean Paladins by Andre Kritzinger

THE ORDER OF MAURICE

EPISODE 4: MEMORIES OF A NIGHTMARE

By Ben Stoddard

When Jephraim opened his eyes, he found Morticus's face staring back at him.

"You're awake. Good. Can you stand?" The captain's face betrayed absolutely no emotion. Jephraim licked his lips, his tongue scratching across their dry surface. He tried to push himself up, but his limbs still felt leaden and all he managed to do was slip onto his side. Morticus helped to prop him back up into a sitting position.

"What happened?" Jephraim rasped.

"You were attacked by a type of demon we refer to as tortured souls." The captain glanced behind him at Berns kneeling over the prone form of Rigo as he wrapped a

bandage around Rigo's waist to staunch a bleeding wound in his side. Rigo's face was blanched and perspiring, while Berns's was strained with concentration, his lips pursed in nervous focus. Wilford sat in a dark corner of the hut, his legs hugged to his chest and his head resting on his knees. He was rocking slowly back and forth.

"You were lucky that Rigo and Berns were here, otherwise you would probably be dead." Morticus's voice was low as he continued. He held up a wineskin with water in it. Jephraim gulped greedily from the cool liquid, the water refreshing his limbs somewhat and allowing him to push himself into a more comfortable position.

"What were those things?" Jephraim's voice was husky as he spoke, as though he were speaking through a mouthful of honey. The effort caused his throat to burn.

"I told you, they were a type of demon we call tortured souls." Morticus didn't look at Jephraim as he spoke. "We're not exactly sure where they come from, but there are a lot of theories: they are the damned souls of those mortals foolish enough to venture into the Abyss, or they are the tortured remnants of Elohi who were burnt by the fires of those demons that dwell in that evil chasm."

"As for me, I think that they are the embodiment of all the cries of suffering that have gone up to the heavens, all the curses and the prayers for revenge of the hurt and dying given shape and sent to wreak havoc upon the mortals of this world. Their cries can dredge up the very worst nightmares you've ever dreamed. That's why Wilford is still incapacitated. He was asleep when they started screaming and wasn't able to brace himself against the memories. That's why you passed out, because you didn't even know what to expect."

Dungeon Saga Undead Skeletons by "C.M. Minis"

Undead Ghouls by "Daedle"

"But I don't remember anything at all. Just a feeling of dread and then a numb sensation that seemed to spread all over my body." Jephraim coughed after speaking so many words in succession. He weakly reached for the wineskin full of water and the captain passed it over to him.

"Often times our worst memories, our greatest fears, if you will, are repressed because they've hurt us so deeply that our minds shut down or deflect those memories when they come up. That explains the numb feeling and the vague sense of dread. Your body shut down rather than allow you to remember the fears that lurk deep inside your soul." Morticus shook his head slowly.

"You act as though you are familiar with that process." Jephraim arched an eyebrow. Morticus didn't speak at first.

"I was born into bloodshed," he said, his words low and quiet. "My mother died at my birth, but not due to complications that usually claim a mother's life. It was only a miracle that managed to save me, but it was an ominous way to start my time on this earth. My mother… hers was not a good end." Morticus sat back on his heels, seeming to stare off into the blank space before him. "Since then, I've seen my share of suffering. Some that I've given and some that I have received. The same as any man, I suppose."

"Oh?" Jephraim pressed, his curiosity piqued. Morticus shook his head slowly.

"I trust you a little more than that first day when we met, thief, but some things I do not speak of. Some things shouldn't be spoken of." Jephraim waited for a long moment, hoping that the captain would give some other hint or tidbit, but the moment passed and Morticus remained as stoic as ever. He sighed and looked over to see Berns sit back from working on Rigo's wound, patting the prone man on the chest. Rigo smiled weakly and closed his eyes softly. His chest rose only

slightly and Jephraim had to focus intently to make sure that the man was even breathing at all.

"How is it that Rigo and Berns were unaffected by the demons?" Morticus blinked at Jephraim's question.

"Those two have been through far worse than anything you could imagine. They've conquered their demons a thousand times over. They still feel the horror that you felt at those cries, but they have learned how to deal with it, which is a good thing for you and a large part of the reason that I brought them with me." The captain shifted his weight slightly so as to better look at the thief.

"You know that they are brothers, right?" This revelation caused Jephraim to start. Morticus nodded and continued. "When they were much, much younger, their village was attacked by Varangur cultists seeking sacrifices for some bloody ritual. Berns was out of town that day with their father, he being the eldest and all. When they returned to the town they found the burnt remnants of their home and their father joined the local band of men who were bent on seeking out the cultists and rescuing their loved ones who had been carried off, mostly wives and children. Their father forbade Berns from going with them, but he was a sneaky child and followed them anyways.

All that did was ensure that he was present to watch the slaughter that befell the men when they did catch up to the Varangur. That was nothing compared to what was to come. This was a battle, no matter how one-sided, and the deaths of those husbands and fathers was swift and violent. Berns was captured as he tried to flee the scene of the bloodshed and taken to join the other prisoners, where he found Rigo and his mother.

Undead Skeletons by Guiseppe Aquino

Undead Skeletons by "imm0rtal reaper"

"They took the captives to a circle of stones with an altar in the middle and began sacrificing the women first. Rigo and Berns were forced to watch as they butchered their mother directly in front of them and at that moment something broke within Berns's mind. He fell into a numb silence and when they were dragged before the altar he started to struggle and cry out. Rigo followed his lead, even managing to bite one of their captors' hands. The cultists didn't take too kindly to this resistance and so cut their tongues out in order to silence them as they called out their protests." Morticus paused here and tilted back his head. "That's why they don't speak except through hand signals."

"How did they survive?" Jephraim's face was twisted into a mask of horror, yet he couldn't stop himself from asking the question. Morticus gave a dry laugh.

"Berns used the blood from his tongue to cause the ropes binding his hands to become slippery. Once they were slick, he pulled them free while the cultist performing the ritual had his back turned. He stabbed the fell priest through the heart with his own sacrificial dagger and sliced the throat of his personal guardsmen before they even realized he was free. Taking one of the guards' blades, he cut Rigo's bonds with the dagger and they fled into the night. They hadn't gone far, though, before they decided to turn around and go back for the other prisoners.

"I don't know how they did it. By all accounts they should have died a dozen times over, but somehow they snuck back into the camp and began a silent butchery of all the Varangur cultists there, somewhere between ten and fifteen barbarians. Perhaps they were tired from the fighting earlier in the day and weren't paying attention. Maybe they had some kind of divine intervention. Or maybe the horrors they had been forced to endure caused a darkness to come over them and they became living embodiments of vengeance, much like those tortured souls.

"They freed the captives and accompanied them to the nearest settlement, which happened to be an outpost for our order. The brother who first saw them said they were a fearful sight, as they were covered in blood. Not only that, but they had a glassed-over look to their eyes, like a fire had burned out behind them. When he heard the account of the surviving villagers, he saw their potential and took them on as his wards, raising them up to be warriors within our order. That was over twenty years ago. I discovered them some eight years back and they have been by my side ever since." Morticus sighed.

"They are like family to me." He leaned in close to Jephraim's face, his eyes burning holes through Jephraim's head. "That is why the demons' cries do not affect them the same way they do you. Rigo and Berns have faced their demons. They have the corpses to prove it. And the scars. They have not only faced their demons, but have emerged triumphant." Morticus maintained his intense stare for a few more moments before leaning back again. Jephraim was quiet for several moments before speaking.

"What about Wilford?" He asked, indicating the huddled shape still rocking in the corner. Morticus closed his eyes and shrugged.

"You should ask him what horrors those cries dredge up from his past. That's something he wouldn't like sharing with just anyone and I'm not sure you've quite earned that confidence yet."

"Surely it can't be anything worse than what Rigo and Berns experienced?"

"You make a fatal mistake in assuming that." Morticus turned his gaze on the prone form of Rigo. "There is no way to quantify suffering or pain when it is not physical. What one might endure with ease may be a ponderous weight to another, and some wounds that seem superficial are actually quite deep. What Wilford has suffered may not seem as terrible as Rigo and Berns's story, and in many ways it isn't, but what those brothers went through they've been able to compartmentalize. The cultists did not target them specifically -- they were almost like a force of nature, random and insensitive to personal needs or desires that they were destroying by their actions. They

Undead Ghouls by Martin Geibner

Undead Zombie by "left64"

have been able to dehumanize them and reduce them to something more akin to animals in their eyes."

"It isn't the most healthy way of dealing with it, but they are able to function perhaps in spite of that, and that is a key element to their suffering and is why Wilford is so prone to these attacks. I will not tell you the details of his past, but this is a key, for how can anyone truly de-humanize their father? To do so would be to admit the possibility, however remote, that perhaps you are not human, either. After all, part of each parent lives on in each of their children." At this revelation Jephraim felt something stir within him, something achingly familiar that caused his own head to spin much like it had when the tortured souls had first appeared. He shook his head and felt a desperate need to change the subject.

"Captain, I believe this is the most that I've ever heard you speak." He tried to force a laugh, but it was choked in his suddenly constricted throat and came out as a strangled cry instead. The captain simply smiled and walked over to place his hand on Berns's shoulder, who looked up at his commander's concerned face and gave a small smile and a curt nod. Morticus squeezed his shoulder one more time before placing his back against the wall against which Berns reclined and sliding down to sit next to him.

"There are still a couple hours til dawn, thief, and we can't go anywhere until our comrades have recovered enough to move, so take the time to rest up and get some sleep. Where we are headed next, that might be an unattainable luxury for some time, so enjoy it while you can." Morticus spoke loudly enough for the whole room to hear, even though Jephraim was sure that neither Berns nor Wilford would be sleeping much. Nor would the captain, so long as his men suffered.

The professional thief nodded and shifted to lay on his side. The world still seemed to be shifted at an unnatural angle, and his stomach still heaved against his ribs. He knew that sleep was likely impossible, but he closed his eyes anyways and thought about this ragged band of warriors into which he'd been drafted. He felt like an outsider. The worst that he could remember having to deal with before this adventure had been sneaking out of a bedroom without alerting a husband or father down the hall or occasionally missing a meal here and there between jobs. He gave a deep sigh and shifted uncomfortably as he thought about the strangers sitting or lying in this room on whom he depended for survival that even now sat nursing wounds of various depths.▪

THE SOULSHARD

By Ender Thompson

Part I - Flight to the Sea

Ten mounted men rode north at a steady canter through the rolling hills of the eastern Mammoth Steppe. Alongside them jogged two ogres – hulking red-skinned creatures with bestial faces and arms like oak trunks. Behind them trailed a dozen riderless horses, one with a body slung over its back, the bloody face hidden by long black hair. They were the last remnants of an ill-fated expedition to the twisted land of Tragar, and now they fled the whips and slave-hooks of the Abyssal Dwarfs. Zarak was three days behind them, though her dreadful denizens could not be more than a day off. If they could reach the frontier port of Skirnirak, they might escape to sea on any boats the refugees had left behind. The alternative did not bear thinking about.

As they crested the highest hill yet, the leader glanced back and signaled a halt. Grateful for the respite, the men half-tumbled from the saddles and held the reins of the exhausted horses while they sat on the yellow grass. One of the ogres snarled something unintelligible to its companion as it sprawled on the hillside. A couple of growls later, the other approached the leader, the top of whose head barely reached the ogre's nose, even mounted as he was.

“My brother and I cannot run much farther, south-man. He says to wait here, on this hill,

Ogre Warriors by Grant Mahoney

Dungeon Saga Lower Abyssals by "C.M. Minis"

to slow our enemies in their pursuit of you," he rumbled.

Handal Merikos regarded the monstrous ogre doubtfully. "Both of you? I should not like to tell your tribe that I failed you all. Even the loss of your three brothers in Zarak they might forgive, for they know the duplicity of the Abyss. But they will never believe that their warriors were unable to finish a run!"

The ogre licked its fangs and grunted. "We have not fallen yet, manling! But founder we will if we run much farther, and your horses cannot carry us. Tell the Fanged Eagle only that we fell to a foe greater than any Ogre and more treacherous than any weasel of a Goblin! And," he added, licking his fangs again, "perhaps do not tell them that we died running."

Handal bowed from his saddle. This was not the first time that exhausted survivors had elected to stay and attempt to delay the enemy – but two ogres might just buy them enough time to reach Skirnirak and safety.

"Do you want anything?" he asked the ogre.

"One horse, for us to eat tonight before the demons come tomorrow."

"I'll see to it."

The ogre gave a nod of its great head and turned away, thumping back down towards its "brother". The ogres of the plains referred to anyone of their tribe as their brother, and normally would not think twice to sacrifice thirty outsiders for one brother. And in cases like this, they were loath to leave a brother to face death alone. Handal admired the courage of the brutes, although he normally detested them. It was quite possible that the two of them, after resting for a day and eating a horse, would be able to do away with an entire regiment of Blacksouls. Handal had seen one particular ogre single-handedly slay a Basilean Ur-Elohi.

He ordered one of the men to give one of the riderless horses to the ogres. Then he looked back once more at the haze of smoke that darkened half the sky over Tragar. Far off he could just make out the glint of the afternoon sun on the armor of their pursuers as they crested a rise.

They rested for perhaps half of an hour, then changed horses and rode on, leaving the doomed ogres to wait on the hillside for their foes. As they reached the top of the next hill, Handal looked back and saw Rakatak standing, watching them leave. Then he descended the other side and the ogre was lost to sight.

Part II - Painful Farewells

It was dusk on the fifth day since they left Zarak when the riders arrived in Skirnirak. Only eight of them were left – Handal held the reins of the horse carrying the dead man, the only riderless horse among them now. The town was totally deserted, but had not yet fallen into disrepair. It was only a month since the inhabitants had fled, after all. They rode through the empty streets,

Orc Kudger on Gore by Darren Lysenko

past the dark inn and onto the abandoned harbor. The only boat in the docks was the one they had arrived in.

It took until dark for the flagging horses to drag the boat into the water. Once they had staggered out of the water, Handal's men slaughtered them and put the meat on board, working through the night rather than stay a moment longer in the empty town. The meat they stored in the small hold, and they filled three barrels of water from the town well. The dead man's body was carefully laid on the bed in the cabin. Just before dawn, they were ready to leave.

Forces of Nature Earth Elementals by George Adsettt-Knutsen

Handal was the last to step aboard. As the boat cast off from the dock, a shadow flew over the deck. Two of the men moaned and pointed skywards as the gargoyle – a lesser fiend commonly employed by the Abyssal Dwarfs – circled to attack. Handal stared at it in despair. It was in the form of a female human figure, but with blue-black skin, clawed hands and feet, and the head of a fiend. Its wing-membranes were dark red, contrasting with the skin in a terrifying way. It howled, and the howl was echoed a dozen or more times from the hills behind Skirnirak. Then it flapped higher, gaining altitude before folding its wings and plummeting towards them.

Handal dove aside as the demon crashed into the deck. Wood splintered and the boat lurched, sending him rolling across its width. Handal leaped to his feet as the gargoyle was joined by three more. They circled above the boat, laughing wickedly as the panicked steersman released the wheel and ran for cover.

Handal ran for the cabin where the dead man's body was lying. He burst through the

hatch, leaving it swinging on its hinges, and flung open a chest near the bed to grab a bow and quiver of arrows.

A scream split the air from the rigging. Handal looked up. One of the frontiersmen who had been setting the sails when the first gargoyle appeared was caught in the claws of two demons who were hoisting him skywards. Handal fumbled with the bowstring, caught the end of the bow and managed to string it. He snatched up an arrow, notched it to the string, and shot at one of the gargoyles tearing at the unfortunate fellow. The arrow hissed over the head of the wrong one. They turned their heads towards him and dropped the frontierman's mangled form into the water. They hissed and screeched as he shouted defiantly at them and let another arrow fly in their general direction. This one came nowhere near either of them. The other gargoyles were now circling down towards the boat, emboldened by the blood spattering their talons. Handal gave up on the bow and flung it down on the deck. He caught sight of two of his men cowering under the bowsprit.

"Get out of there, you lily-livered lickspittles!" he shouted, incensed. "Draw your swords and defend the helm!"

They looked at him with terrified faces, but did what they were told. Handal joined them as they stood around Narik, the steersman. They were not a moment too soon.

Dwarven Bulwarkers by Peter Grose

Obstacle terrain by Rob Phaneuf

A gargoyle flew down to the deck and advanced menacingly towards the wheel and the three men defending it. At the same time one of those circling overhead dove at Narik. Handal shouted and swung his sword but the blow glanced off its rock-hard flesh. It veered off and looped around for another attempt while a third descended to balance on the rail.

Meanwhile the three men still on the bottom deck had engaged the other gargoyle, surrounding it and hacking at its wings to keep it from taking off. As Handal watched, one of them darted in and thrust his sword with all his might into the monster's gaping mouth. It slumped, vomiting a foul yellow stuff that charred the deck where it spilled.

The one on the rail pulled a fearful face and sprang. One of the men with Handal shouted and cut at its face. The thing caught his sword in one hand and tore the man's throat out with the other before Handal stabbed it through the eye, killing it instantly. The gargoyle that Handal had failed to injure swooped at the men on the lower deck and tried to grab one in passing, but the agile frontiersman stepped out of the fiend's reach and slashed its wing membrane as it shot past. Unable to flap, the thing tumbled into the harbor with a resounding splash. At first Handal thought its wings were dragging it to the bottom, but the salt water was actually dissolving the gargoyle's unnatural flesh. It screamed twice before it gave up the struggle and sank below the surface.

The remaining gargoyle circled the ship, eyeing the sharp swords below. The rapid demise of its brethren appeared to have put it off attacking for the time being, but it was loath to return to its hellish masters empty-handed. Finally it gave a suspiciously human-sounding cackle and perched on the mast where it grinned evilly at the dismayed men on the deck. It wrapped its talons around the spar and appeared to freeze in place, looking for all the world like an extremely large and ugly masthead.

Part III - A Strange Passenger

“Why is it just sitting there?” called Trovi. He was the youngest of the group, a lanky red-headed fellow barely twenty years old. The young man nervously switched sword hands, and back again.

“A better question would be how long does it plan to stay?” said Narik. “We can't exactly get it down, gargoyles have a nasty habit of reviving just when you within reach.”

Five frightened gazes turned to Handal. He glared up at the demon and tried to recall everything that the dwarven Warsmiths had told them about the creatures of the Wicked Ones. Everybody knew gargoyles could turn themselves to stone, but Gravis had not known whether they remained aware of their surroundings while petrified.

"Fortunately, the beast has not harmed the sails!" he said. "If it stays where it is, we can still reach Cur Darag and there the Stone Priests will have power over it. It is only two days sailing, and we can keep a watch on the mast. As long as it doesn't move we must continue our travel, but if it twitches so much as a wingtip we will have to do something."

This was received with a fair bit of grumbling, but nobody seemed eager to attempt dislodge the demon from its post and Handal had been dealing with monsters since before some of them had been born. Trovit was declared "demon-watcher" by unanimous decision – unanimous except for Trovit, of course – and the others began to relax a bit, although with many dark glances at the unwelcome addition to the boat's crew.

Handal looked around at his skeleton crew. Even if they had not been dead-dog tired from nearly six days of riding and fighting with little food and less sleep, they would still be a dirty, loutish bunch. Narik, the steersman, was the only one aboard besides Handal who knew how to navigate. He was

Dungeon Saga Abyssal Molochs by "C.M. Minis"

Abyssal Dwarf Gargoyles by "Dwarf Giant"

short and stocky, with a misshapen lump of a nose and a scar running through his stringy black hair.

Trovit, the most junior member of the expedition, was a twitchy sort on his first adventure. He carried a nicked and rusted sword he claimed had been left him by his father. Rivio the Keretian was a towering figure of a dockworker-turned-adventurer. Mosa the Genezan was a small, ratlike man who carried more daggers than there were swords in the company. Lurac was a dark-skinned bruiser who had been with Handal longer than anyone still alive on the ship. Timmo had been a smiling, fast-talking thief whose luck had carried him through many a scrape, until the gargoyle's talons had ended his streak.

The thirteen-man company had been visiting the Free Dwarf hold of Cwl Gen when Gravis, their mage, was snatched by Abyssal Dwarf agents hidden among their honest kin. A furious chase through the Halpi mountains had ensued and just as the high peaks began to give way to rolling hills and tall grass they had caught the dark dwarves and slain them all with the help of five ogres who had been cut off from their hunting party. During the fight, however, an Abyssal sorcerer had joined the fight long enough to grab the weakened Gravis and teleport away with him. Although the ogres had been able to ascertain that Gravis had been taken to the citadel of Zarak, they had been forced to withdraw to Cur Darag, the northernmost Free Dwarf hold. The ogres, ever opportunistic, had decided to join the mercenaries for the chance to raid the treasure-houses of the Abyssal Dwarfs.

From Cur Darag they had sailed to the human outpost of Skirnirak and found it almost entirely deserted. The captain of the last boat to leave had told Handal that the Abyssal Lords were stirring, and that they had been fighting off the Abyssal raiders nearly every night for two weeks. From him they had obtained horses for the men and

food for the ogres, and they had ridden to Zarak where, to their surprise, they were welcomed by greasily-smiling Abyssal Dwarfs who had appeared quite willing to discuss the ransom of Gravis. Handal, with the help of the leader of the five ogres, had managed to obtain Gravis' release in return for the servitude of three ogre tribes (ogres never being too picky about who they fought for, so long as they fought).

Their reunion with Gravis would have been a joyful event had the Abyssals not slain the mage with a crossbow the moment he was out of their hands. Worse, Mosa had returned the favor by throwing one of his knives through the bowstring and into the eye of the murderer, thereby kicking off a night of battle in the streets of Zarak that had resulted in their mad flight to Skirnirak with Gravis' body.

They rolled Timmo's nearly-decapitated body over the gunwale as the boat passed the promontory of the desert island east of Skirnirak. Off in the distance, the Cape of Zarak was shrouded in fog, which struck Handal as odd considering the heat of the sun.

"Narik, take us well clear of the fog bank if you can. It doesn't look natural, and I know there was at least one Ironcaster in the troops that chased us to the coast. I don't know if they can control weather but we had better steer clear of the Cape anyhow."

Ogre Warriors versus Orc Trolls by Grant Mahoney

Undead Revenants by Guiseppe Aquino

Narik nodded and set the boat on a course farther to the east, aiming to go the long way around the pair of islands that straddled the opening to the Sea of Bari. As they passed behind the larger and the fog was hidden from view, Handal heard a far-off braying sound, as if a thousand horns had blared at once.

On the lower deck, Trovit shivered. Narik took one hand off the helm to make a sign against evil, then looked askance at the gargoyle perched motionless on the mast.

“Handal, maybe he ain't movin', but I still get the feelin' we oughta get rid of that ugly-arse excuse for a chickenhawk before it gets rid of us, if you takes my meanin',” he muttered.

“Don't worry, Narik. Trovit's watching him. Even if it does move you can be damn sure he'll let us know.”

Narik grinned briefly at the recollection of Trovit's first encounter with a demon. The young man had been so shocked and terrified that he had yammered like an idiot until the thing left. It was the first cheerful expression Handal had seen in weeks.

“We'll be fine, Narik. You know the demon doesn't like salt water and here we are surrounded by it. I'm going to go sleep in the cabin, come wake me in a couple hours and I'll take the helm. Even I can steer us straight across the Sea of Bari.”

Finally daring to feel somewhat hopeful, he descended the ladder to the lower deck and crossed to the cabin to get some much-needed sleep.

Part IV - Dwarves and Demons

Three days later, slowed somewhat by a cross wind and the heavy demon – who remained immobile and unresponsive – making it impossible to adjust the sails, the boat sailed slowly into Darag Bay, which to all appearances was deserted. Even the rocky shores seemed empty except for a small boathouse at the farthest inlet. It was toward this wooden structure that Narik steered them.

Handal, much the better for some sleep and a pair of square meals, went to the prow of the boat and leaned out over the water. As the boat approached the shore he hallooed the boathouse a couple of times before a side door opened and a very short, very bearded fellow appeared, blinking a bit in the unaccustomed sunlight.

"Halloo the boatkeeper! Let us in, we have returned by a miracle!" Handal shouted across the water.

Kingdoms of Men Standard Bearer by "imm0rtal reaper"

"Halloo yerself, mercenary, and pray tell what in the name of Golloch's Hold is that?" the dwarf yelled back, pointing in confusion at the gargoyle.

"A new golem for your Priest Kragni, what else? I told you we would not return empty-handed, and we have collected a stone demon for Kragni and recovered the body of Gravis!"

By this time the boatkeeper dwarf had pulled the lever to open the doors, which up close were quite a bit larger than they had appeared across the bay. They swung silently inwards as the boat floated through and into a long tunnel lit only by torches in brackets on the walls.

"A golem, says you? Well in all my long years I never did see a golem that ugly, and I recall the one that my old great-grandda tried to make out of clay. 'Twas the most shapeless, malformed, *sticky* monster y'ever did see, and I recall the slop creature that invaded the kitchen in the hard winter..." the boatkeeper rambled as the doors swung shut behind the boat, cutting them off from the sun. He strolled along beside the hull on a narrow stone walkway jutting out from the wall. As he walked, the old dwarf – for he was over two centuries old – treated the weary sailors to accounts of every memory that crossed his mind, including the famous incident of Cousin Throgo's beard and Great-Aunt Magarr's armchair.

The boat moved along slowly, no longer moved by the wind but rather by a strong current in the passageway which stretched

Undead Skeletons by Jim Kew

ahead a fair distance before suddenly widening out into a vast cavern filled with boats, ships, and floating docks with dwarves hard at work loading and unloading their barges. There were many other underground waterways leading out of the cavern, and brightly lit barges floated in and out laden with cargo.

As the boat entered the cavern, Handal heard a cracking sound behind him and a shriek from Trovit. He whirled around to see the gargoyle on the mast unfurling its wings and shedding chips of flint onto the deck around the mast. Before Handal could draw his sword, it had fully awakened and twisted to face him with glowing red eyes.

"I thank thee, sellsword," it hissed at him, nearly causing him to drop his sword in surprise. "The mage is mine!"

With a shriek of triumph it leapt from its perch and flapped low across the water towards the docks. Handal stared after it in shock. He had never heard of gargoyles having voices, or glowing eyes, for that matter. As the demon swooped over the docks dwarfs shouted in surprise and blew warning horns until the underground harbor rang with the echoes, but the demon ignored them completely and flew straight as an arrow towards the wide passages leading to the dwarf city.

As the boat reached the docks, a young dwarf rushed toward them. On spotting Handal, he skidded to a stop and caught his breath before speaking.

"I am Bruli son of the Stone Priest Brogir, and I am to warn you that my father has no power over the demon that returned with

you! A greater Lord of the Abyss is controlling it, and my father believes that it is looking for the familiar of the mage Gravis," the dwarf said in a rush. He was very young for a dwarf, with barely a beard to speak of.

"But Gravis is dead," Mosa said with a scowl. He had been the wizard's closest friend in Handal's company for several years. "His familiar must be as well."

"The bird keeled over dead in its cage a week ago. But my father says the demon can possess the bird's body and through it control the mage's body, with all of Gravis' powers." the dwarf recited. "It cannot possess Gravis' body directly because he had many wards against demons, but the mage did not foresee a demon entering the hold when he left his familiar in our care."

"Has your father divined why the Abyssals are so interested in Gravis?" Handal asked.

"He says that Gravis' familiar revealed to him that Gravis once stole an artifact of tremendous power from the hall of the Ironcaster Ak-Shabarr, who has never stopped searching for it. The Ironcaster thinks Gravis still has the artifact and by controlling Gravis' body and powers he will be able to recover his artifact," said Bruli.

Handal winced. Gravis had been notoriously obsessed with magical artifacts of all kinds. "Perhaps we should simply let the demon take its artifact?"

Elven Hero by Jonathan Faulkes

Dwarven Heroes by Jose Manuel Chasco Gonzalez

Bruli blanched. “Never, Handal. Ironcaster Ak-Shabarr dreams of conquering Cur Darag, and with his artifact returned to him he would surely be unstoppable. I have no idea how he failed to obtain it while Gravis was in his possession.”

“Then where is the familiar's body? Surely you didn't just throw it away like trash?” Handal asked.

“My father is guarding the canary's body, but the demon,” and here Bruli winced and clutched at his head, “has begun its attack. He can barely affect it at all with his mastery of stone: the Ironcaster's power is incredible. He asks you to guard the body of Gravis in case he fails and the Ironcaster takes control of the mage.”

“That we can do. If Gravis is turned against us, can we kill him?”

“Perhaps. It would be surer to destroy the artifact, as the Ironcaster would most probably desist without the chance of obtaining his prize.”

“What does the artifact look like, then?” Handal asked.

“My father does not know, but he says you would be unable to destroy it in any case.” Bruli said. Then he gave a sigh of relief and collapsed, unconscious. Handal looked at the supine dwarf in disbelief – he had never heard of a dwarf fainting! A pair of older dwarfs, who had come puffing up behind Bruli, picked him up off the floor.

“Stone Priest Brogir can speak through his son's mouth when he must, but it is very hard on the young one's brains, ye see,” one of them explained as they began to carry the snoring Bruli back towards the passages

leading to the city.

"Hard on his brains?" a voice behind Handal said. "My my, this has been a day of headaches!"

As the mercenaries whirled around, a blast of hot air sent them tumbling across the docks. Floating a good foot off the dock, the tip of the bolt that had killed him still sticking out of his chest, Gravis' dead eyes shone a dull red.

Part V - Avenging Blade

Lurac was the first to recover his balance as the dock bobbed in the water. He took a firm hold on his mace and charged at Gravis. The mage flicked a finger and a streak of blue lightning blasted the big man into a shower of ash. The others stumbled to their feet, staring in shock at the dead wizard.

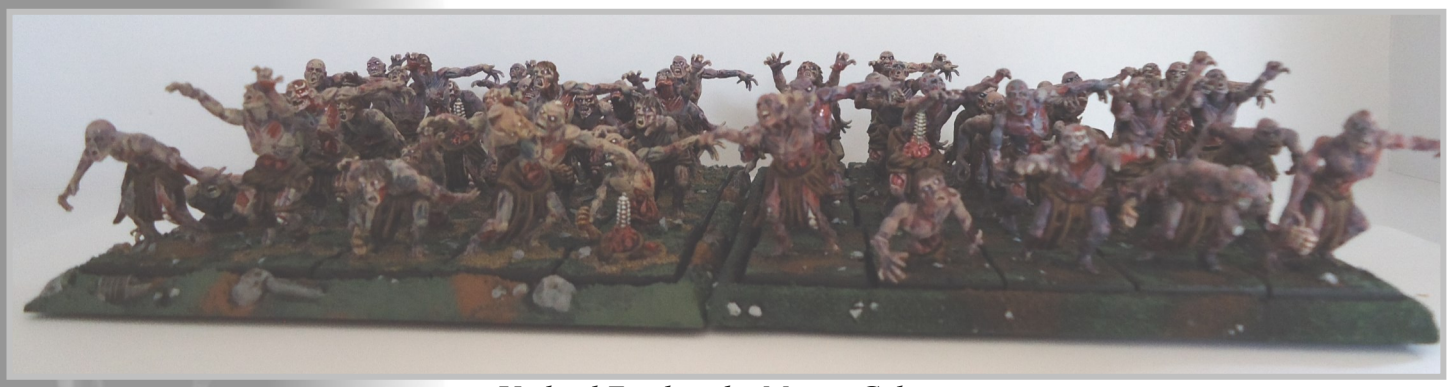
Gravis raised a hand in a mocking salute, then swept it downwards. The floating wooden dock was shattered into a dozen pieces beneath their feet, spilling Lurac and Trovit into the water. Handal found himself sharing a section with Mosa, while Narik fell to his hands and knees on another. Gravis hovered over the water, with nothing except the Ironcaster's magic holding him aloft.

"Where is it?" he snarled, moving towards Handal. "It's mine, human! Tell me where it is!" Then he hissed in surprise and spun around, backhanding Mosa into the water with terrifying strength. Two of the Genezan's knives protruded from his back along with the feathers of the crossbow bolt. Handal took the opportunity to slash at Gravis' right shoulder. The dead flesh gave way easily and the arm splashed into the water. Ak-Shabarr screamed in true pain and recoiled higher into the air for a moment before recovering.

"Foolish man!" Gravis' face hissed. "I will ask you once more, and perhaps I will let you live if you answer me; where is the Soulshard?"

In response, Handal ran his sword through Gravis' chest. It grated on one of Mosa's daggers. Ak-Shabarr gasped, then shattered the blade with a swing of his remaining hand. Shards of iron flew, and Handal received a cut across the forehead from a piece of his own sword. He lost his balance

Undead Skeleton by "left64"



Undead Zombies by Martin Gebiner

and tumbled into the cold black water.

"You will not tell me!" the Ironcaster raged. "I will tear you apart, fool!" Gravis' battered corpse raised its arm and Handal rose out of the water, an invisible force grabbing him around the waist and hoisting him into the air. Then he fell back into the water as Ak-Shabarr's concentration was broken yet again, this time by Narik's sword slicing into Gravis' right side. Gravis' body spun about, but with no arm on that side he was unable to cripple Narik the way he had Mosa. At the same time, Trovit shouted and flung a piece of the dock at the animated mage, having lost his weapon when the dock split. The broken plank hit Gravis right in the forehead, smashing his nose. The Ironcaster let out a howl of frustration and sent a blast of raw force outwards in all directions, knocking Trovit and Narik into the water again and setting those already in the water bobbing away from him. Rivio, the strongest swimmer of the bunch, dove underwater and came up directly underneath the floating corpse. The Keretian grabbed both of Gravis' ankles and hauled him into the water by brute force.

For a moment nothing could be made out through the splashes, but suddenly the water turned red and Rivio's lifeless form appeared, torn nearly in half. Handal clambered back onto a section of dock as Gravis rose out of the water.

"No more playing!" Ak-Shabarr roared, and his voice echoed off the cavern walls. Handal, Narik, Trovit, and Mosa were hoisted out of the water as Handal had been before. They hovered in a ring around Gravis, whose hand began to glow red-hot.

"Who shall go first?" the Ironcaster boomed. "Who shall tell me where the Soulshard is?"

Mosa, though one arm was clearly broken and he appeared to be having difficulty breathing, pulled a long knife from his belt and flung it at Gravis. It sank into the mage's arm-stump, the handle sticking out like an absurdly small replacement arm. All it did was infuriate Ak-Shabarr even more, however.

The Ironcaster turned on Mosa, extending Gravis' arm and causing all of Mosa's remaining knives to fly out from their sheaths and hiding places to circle him. Even Handal was surprised by how many there were.

"Turn my weapon against me, will you?" Ak-Shabarr hissed through Gravis' mouth. "See

how you like it!" With a flick of his wrist the circle of blades closed. Mosa coughed bright red blood and sagged in the air. A sneer cracked Gravis' pallid face and he released Mosa, who splashed into the water impaled on his own knives.

Ak-Shabarr began to turn towards Trovit, and the gargoyle swooped out of nowhere and slammed into Gravis. The spell broken, the three surviving mercenaries fell to the bloody water yet again. As they caught hold of the remains of the dock, Handal looked up and saw the gargoyle swiftly pounding Gravis' corpse into a shapeless, gory mass. The gargoyle swung its talons viciously as it destroyed Ak-Shabarr's vessel. As Handal watched, it grabbed the mangled body and tore it in half.

A horrible shriek echoed throughout the harbor as Ak-Shabarr's spirit fled, defeated, back to the Abyss and its proper body. The pieces of Gravis' body joined the mess in the water, and the gargoyle looped around the cavern before skimming the surface of the water to scoop up the dumbstruck mercenaries one by one and deposit them on the docks that were still intact. Then the demon landed a few docks away and sat back on its haunches.

Elven Prince on Dragon by Matt Gilbert

Basliean Army by Paul Mullis

"Are ye hurt?" a gravelly voice inquired. Handal looked up to see a white-bearded dwarf standing over him, extending a hand the size of a small shovel. Handal accepted it and was hauled to his feet. Nearly a hundred other dwarfs stood looking rather awestruck behind the old dwarf, whom Handal recognized as Stone Priest Borgir.

"Everyone's dead," Handal stammered, exhaustion sweeping over him like a tidal wave.

"Ye have taken a beatin', that's for sure," the dwarf agreed, before calling the other dwarfs to come and care for the dripping humans.

Part VI - The Soulshard

"I want to know why Gravis was captured," Handal said. Narik nodded agreement.

The three surviving members of Handal's mercenary company stood in the center of Brogir's hall, while the Stone Priest himself sat in a comfortable armchair near a crackling fire. Trovit alone had escaped uninjured from the battle with Ak-Shabarr, while Handal had an ugly line of stitches across his forehead and Narik had one arm in a sling. They had decided to stay in Cur Darag a while to recover and decide what to do next.

"Well, he stole something very important from Ironcaster Ak-Shabarr of Zarak," Brogir

said. He pulled a glowing piece of kindling from the fireplace and used it to light a pipe, which he puffed on several times before continuing.

"The wizard Gravis was much more powerful than I believe any of you suspected. He took up traveling with you only to stay one step ahead of the Abyssal Dwarfs. Even then, he was not able to evade them forever.

"The Soulshard was forged nearly a thousand years ago, during the God War. It was Garkan the Black's first experiment in the work that led him to create the orcs. He captured the soul of a dying Wicked One in a magnificent sword, which was later shattered into five pieces by Domivar, son of Mescator. Four pieces were destroyed by the men of Primovantor, but one piece fell into the hands of the Abyssal Dwarfs. They learned to channel the power of the shard, and may have used it to master the gargoyles and half-breeds. The Ironcaster that held the shard was always the most feared and respected of all Abyssal Dwarfs, if not always the most powerful.

"While the Soulshard was in the possession of our friend Ak-Shabarr, he had a disastrously unlucky meeting with a young elfmage named Alarion. Although the

Dwarven Elemental versus Kingdoms of Men Arquebusiers by Peter Grose

Abyssal Dwarf Blacksouls by "puggimer"

Ironcaster easily destroyed the mageling, Alarion's death curse tore the Soulshard from Ak-Shabarr's clutches and sent it flying around the earth for a year and a day. When it fell to earth again, it was discovered by Gravis who, recognizing the massive power of the artifact, used it to gain status among the mages of the Successor Kingdoms. Word of his exploits came to Ak-Shabarr's ears, and he turned all of his magic and spies to searching for Gravis and the Soulshard.

"Gravis soon discovered that he was being hunted, and being an unusually prudent mage, he hid the Soulshard so well that I doubt even the Green Lady knows where it is – certainly I do not – and joined the first mercenary company he came across in order to travel as randomly around Mantica as was possible. Unfortunately, the minions of Ak-Shabarr picked up his trail in the Golloch Empire and alerted the Abyssal spies among the Free Dwarfs to his arrival. You have lived and breathed the rest of the tale."

"So we have, to our sorrow," Handal said. "However useful they may be in a pinch, next time a mage asks to join my troop I'll give him the flat of my blade and tell him to be off before he brings otherworldly doom and destruction on our heads!"

The Stone Priest Brogir's eyes twinkled. "A wise policy, sellsword. We dwarfs have never had such problems with wizards, but then," he puffed on his pipe before continuing, "we never have taken much of a liking to elves or mages. Anything demon-possessed is best left buried and forgotten, and we shall hope the Soulshard remains so till the end of days."▪

LORDS OF THE DEAD

Rules for Building Undead Bosses in Dungeon Saga

By Brad P.

The dead do not rest easy in the lands of Mantica. All manner of foul things cling to an unnatural existence and stalk the lands, hunting for the living. Often these creatures are bound under the control of a powerful necromantic spellcaster, but at other times another creature with a hateful soul can bind and control them to do its bidding. Any wise hero would do well to be informed about the nature of these creatures, as who knows what is really lurking in the darkness at the bottom of that crypt.

Skeleton Archer: Model by Reaper Miniatures, Painted by Brad P.

Dungeon Saga's most common enemy is currently the Undead, as they are provided in the core game and the first expansion, Return of Valandor. Undead are therefore an obvious opponent for building your own adventures or playing the Uncharted Dungeons section of the Adventurer's Companion. The Adventurer's Companion provides a guide for building Bosses using the Hero Creation rules, but does not provide any racial templates for Undead Bosses. Undead are a very diverse group of enemies, with many possible Boss options available.

Here, two new templates for Undead Bosses, Revenant and Apparition, will be developed along with their special rules and the directions for how to apply them. With these, you can make your own Undead Bosses to challenge any adventurers foolish enough to get in their way.

Both of these templates work a little differently than the standard racial templates. Since a Dwarf Revenant and the Dragon Revenant would be very different Bosses, these templates are added after the initial character generation. First, you take the model's original race and class and create a 0th level Boss. Then, put the modifiers and abilities for the Undead template on the Boss, as well, like it was a class. For higher level Bosses who can challenge more advanced characters, you then have an additional table to draw possible Advancements, allowing for 4 possible choices at each level.

This helps compensate for the fact that you generally will not be taking the time to run Bosses for specific adventures through the full downtime sequences which provide Heroes access to additional choices when advancing. The Undead templates also provide a new racial feat only available to that type of Undead Boss.

One note about Bosses and Overlord models: many spells and abilities presented in Dungeon Saga materials say that they are done at the end of the round. This is a problem for the Overlord as he activates after the Heroes most of the time, so defensive measures and such for his models are not available. To allow the Overlord characters access to more interesting abilities and spells the following rule change is suggested:

When an Overlord model does something during the Overlord Turn that normally lasts until the end of the round, it should instead last until the beginning of the next Overlord Turn. If the action in question was during an Interrupt, then the normal end of round rule applies.

Revenant:
Revenants are skeletal Undead with souls still strongly bound to their bones, which allow for free will and intelligent actions if not being controlled by a more powerful force. Creatures like Liches or Wights would be placed under this template. Revenants can be very tough to kill but are slower and no more skilled combatants than they were

LVL	OPTION
1	*Tough*
2	*Stalwart*
3	*Frenzy*
4	*Relentless*
5	*Magical Defense*

LVL	OPTION
6	*Tough*
7	*Frenzy*
8	+1 Armour
9	*Stalwart*
10	*Magical Defense*

Revenant Stat Modifications and Advancement Options

Funnybone
Undead Jester
Ability: Singer of Songs
Funnybone can Sing Songs.
Ability: Nimble
If Funnybone suffers one or more Hits in a Fight, roll 1 dice before working out any damage. On a roll of a 6 Funnybone is not hurt. Instead he makes an immediate Break Away move. Assume all possible free strikes miss. If there is nowhere for Funnybone to Break Away to then the model is damaged as normal.
Ability: Tough
At the end of each Round roll a single dice. On the roll of a 6 the model heals one wound.
Ability: Skeletal Lord
The first hit from any attack on Funnybone is ignored, any additional hits will cause a maximum of 1 Wound like a normal attack on a Heroic Model.
Ability: Magical Defense (1)
The model may reroll 1 dice that fail to beat his armor when defending against a Magical attack.
Feat: Reassemble
Funnybone often finds reattaching lost limbs to be pretty easy. When using this feat, Funnybone rolls one dice per wound he has taken, for each 3-6 rolled a wound is healed..
MOVEMENT: 7
COMBAT DICE: 3
SHOOTING DICE: 2
SHORT RANGE
ARMOUR: 3

Funnybones: Model and Painting by Mantic Games. Image Provided by Dave Symonds.

in life. Ending their existence can still be a challenge.

Skeletal Lord: The first hit from any attack is ignored. Any additional hits will cause a maximum of 1 Wound like a normal attack on a Heroic Model.

Magical Defense (1-3): The model may re-roll X dice that fail to beat his armor when defending against a Magical attack.

Racial Feat: Reassemble. Being a pile of bones bound together by magical forces has its advantages. Revenants often find reattaching lost limbs to be pretty easy. When using this feat, the model rolls one dice per wound it has taken. For each 3-6 rolled a wound is healed.

Funnybone

Like a bad joke that will not die, an undead jester has been plying his trade across Mantica for generations. One would assume that with all that time to practice, he would have gotten better but perhaps it is hard to sing when your tongue has long since rotted away. When he and his crew of similarly-fated helpers arrive in town to put on a show, wise inhabitants vacate the area. Many a brave adventurer has claimed to have defeated Funnybone, but he always seems to reappear somewhere else a few years later with a new wardrobe and accompaniment.

For an example of a Revenant Boss, I will create Funnybone, the undead Jester at 6th level. The best initial class is Bard and initial

race is human. While 6th level is fairly high, the bard is a support class so will not challenge heroes in combat without minions to work with. A Human Bard starts with initial stats of Move 8, Combat Dice 3, Armor 2, and 2 Clear Hearts, along with Versatile and Singer of Songs. Applying the Revenant template converts these to Move 7, Combat Dice 3, Armor 3, and 5 Clear Hearts, with Skeletal Lord replacing Versatile. For his initial Songs he has *Drink Up, Drink Up!* and *The Talking Fish*.

For 1st level, he learns another song from the Bard table, *A Halfling's Lament*. At 2nd level, he selects +1 Short Shooting dice and at 3rd level, he takes Nimble, both from the Bard table. For his advancement at 4th level, he takes the Revenant Racial Feat, Reassemble. At 5th level, he selects Magical Defense from the Revenant table and finally at 6th level, he selects Tough. While Funnybone took his last advancements all from the Revenant table, he was perfectly able to pick them from the Human or Bard tables if those were the abilities he desired.

Apparition:
Apparitions are semi-corporeal Undead that have limited interaction with the physical world. More powerful than Ghosts or Wraiths, Apparitions are not often found under the controls of others, but ancient curses or very potent necromancers might be able to bind them. Apparitions are not purely ethereal, but are able to partially diminish and increase their interactions with the physical world to match the situation.

LVL	OPTION
1	*Stealth*
2	*Spectral* ✖
3	*Swoop*
4	+1 Move
5	*Spectral* ✖

LVL	OPTION
6	*Relentless*
7	*Frenzy* ✖
8	*Stealth*
9	*Swoop*
10	*Spectral* ✖

Apparition Stat Modifications and Advancement Options

The Shadow Hunter
Apparition Demon Hunter
Ability: Null
A model that is within Short range of the Shadow Hunter must roll a single dice for each spell they wish to cast. On a 1 the spell is disrupted and cannot be cast again that Round. On a 2 the spell works, but takes so much effort that the caster's Turn ends once it has been resolved. On a 3-6 the spell works as normal.
Note that Null is indiscriminate and is equally disruptive to all spell casting by both sides.
Feat: Vanish
The Shadow Hunter is removed from play. He does not heal any wounds taken and existing spell effects on him expire as normal. Mark his last position with a necromancy counter. When the Shadow Hunter is next activated, place him in any square within short range of his former position. This will generate free strikes if he reappears in an enemy model's front arc. He counts as having moved for this activation but my still perform an Action if desired.
Ability: Walk Through Walls
The Shadow Hunter can move through solid walls. A wall counts as one space regardless of its actual size. The Shadow Hunter cannot end his Turn inside a wall. When moving, the square immediately before and after a wall must be in the same row or column of the Dungeon Layout.
Ability: Spectral (1)
When the Shadow Hunter is damaged, roll X dice. If one or more die results in a 6 he ignores the result of the attack and takes no damage. A model with both Spectral and Nimble must choose which to use against a successful attack.
Ability: Relentless
If the model's first Fight attack in a Turn results in any damage to the defender then they may immediately make a second Fight attack against the same or different enemy model.
MOVEMENT: 7
COMBAT DICE: 4
SHOOTING DICE: 2
SHORT RANGE
ARMOUR: 4

Wraith Model for The Shadow Hunter: Model by Reaper Miniatures, Painted by Brad P.

This allows it not only it to pass through solid objects but also to attack unwary Heroes.

Spectral (1-3): When this model is damaged, roll X dice. If one or more dice results in a 6, the model ignores the result of the attack and takes no damage. A model with both Spectral and Nimble must choose which to use against a successful attack.

Racial Feat: Vanish. The model is removed from play. It does not heal any wounds taken and existing spell effects on it expire as normal. Mark its last position with a necromancy counter. When it is next activated, place it in any square within short range of its former position. This will generate free strikes if it reappears in an enemy model's front arc. It counts as having moved for this activation but may still perform an action if desired.

The Shadow Hunter

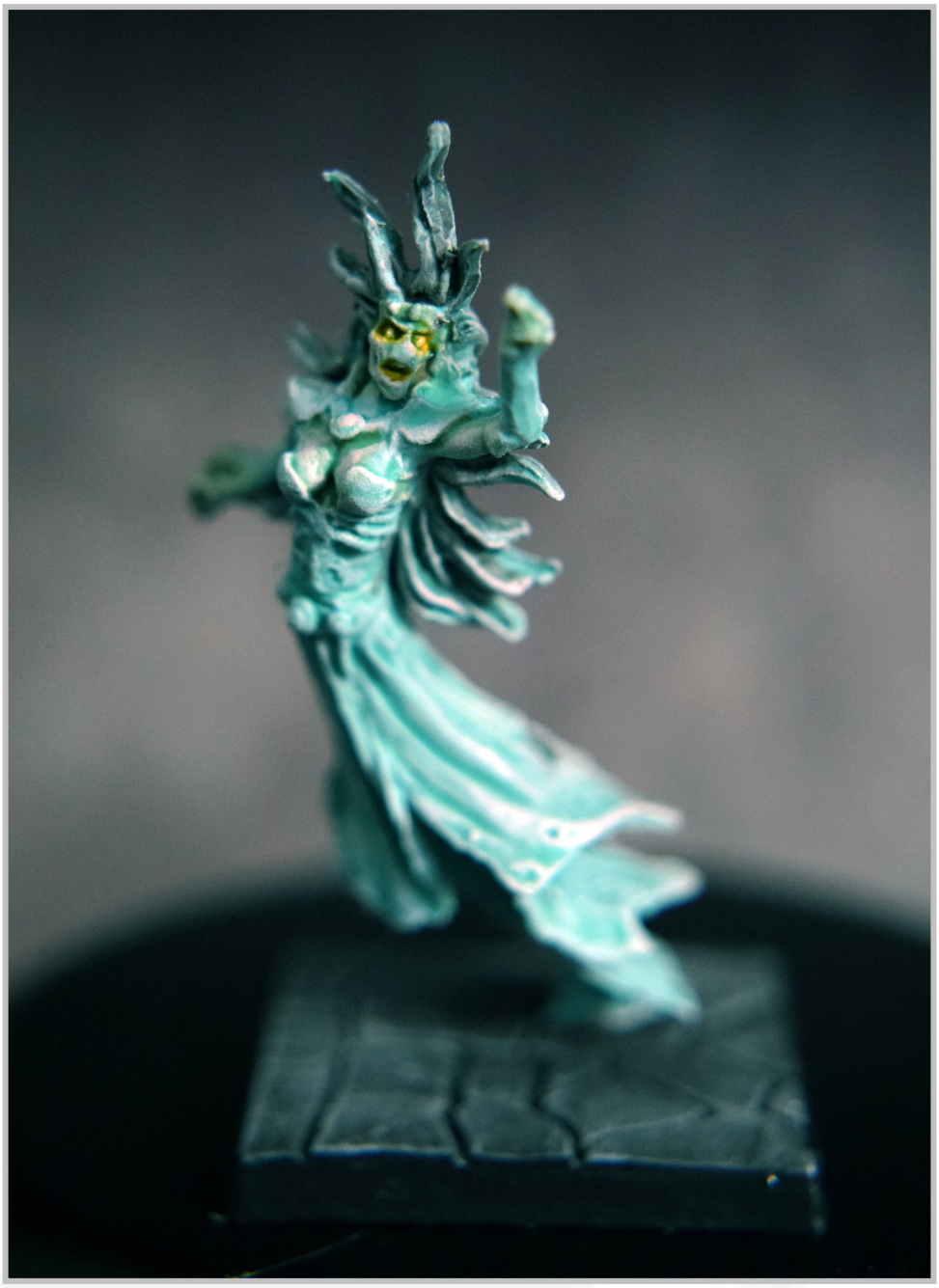
The Shadow Hunter is hunting for souls. It especially craves those of spell casters. Some scholars believe that this tortured soul was once an honorable witch hunter whose continued existence is the result of a curse during his final failed mission. Whether the Shadow Hunter consumes the captured souls of those he slays or takes them to a higher power is a mystery to even the most learned men of Mantica.

The Shadow Hunter again starts as a human with the base class of Demon Hunter, as this is pretty close to the skills that a Mage

Hunter would have. Initial Stats are Move 7, Combat Dice 4, Armor 2, and 3 Clear Hearts, along with the Null ability. Adding in the Apparition template makes it Move 7, Combat Dice 4, Armor 4, and 5 Clear Hearts with Null and Walk Through Walls.

At level one, it takes Relentless from the Demon Hunter table. At its second level, it takes Spectral from the Apparition table; at third level +1 shooting dice from the Demon Hunter table and, at 4th level, the Racial Feat Vanish from the Apparition table.

Now go forth, and raise your own Undead legions led by your own custom-made Revenant and Apparition Bosses!▪



Elshara Dungeon Saga Boss by "C.M. Minis"

Step 1: The Base Coat

PAINTING SKELETONS

By Guillaume Bertin

Rise, ye undead! Rise! I am enjoying the Mantic miniatures from Dungeon Saga, and taking advantage of this game to both continue an old project and to start a new one:

Finishing all undeads from second Hero Quest box. For the youngest, Hero Quest is an old "dungeon crawler" released in the early 90's. This game is responsible for me being a geek today. - Starting the Dungeon Saga box , with the six skeletons.

Later, once I finish a skeleton from Hero Quest, I'll blog a picture of one painted 5 months ago and a new one ;) A friend told me to stop dry brushing (even on skeletons), that's exactly what I'm doing!!! I wanted to share with you the steps I used to paint these skeletons. I am far from being a skillful painter, but I am doing my best at painting, and I love to give "life" to my miniatures, to "animate" them (so to speak #necromancer-evil-laughter). There are plenty of techniques possible to paint awesome skeletons, but here my goal is to help those of the gamers who resent painting so far, and to show that it is possible to get nice results with a few steps and a little bit of patience.

For more efficiency, I decided to batch all my skeletons (even the Hero Quest ones). Batching miniatures allows you to paint more miniatures at a time, using the same colors over them, and then saving some time, not cleaning, rinsing your brushes/ water every time!

Here we go for the step by step:

First step: a black primer covering all miniatures, just any black acrylic painting

works fine, I generally use “Citadel” or “Liquitex” primers. Here I chose to paint directly with a big base brush since climatic conditions are not good enough to spray. I still haven’t prepared a box, so it explains why you can see some grey on the bases where I did not paint.

The second step was two thin base coats of “Zandri Dust” from “Citadel”. All painting references will be Citadel paintings, I will try to be as precise as possible on what and how and why I choose one or another. Here “Zandri Dust” covers the miniature very well (it is a “base” color), so I just thin it down with a drop of water on the brush I tipped and mix on a palette. Once first coat dried, I repeated the process one more time just to make sure the color was nice and strong.

The next step takes a little bit longer. I generally block all colors on the miniatures. For the skeletons with scythes, the job is a fairly easy one. I covered the wooden part with two thin coats of “Mournfang Brown” and the blades with “Leadbelcher”. Both colors are bases too, thinned down on the palette with just a small drop of water, a very small one for the metallic paint since it can lose its pigments easily! Also, think about cleaning your water after metallic paints, since pigments can “contaminate” other colors if you tip the brush afterwards!

For the “archers” and the “warriors”, there is a little bit more to do, clothes, mantles, belts... You want to make sure you get the parts right, so I strongly advise you to check a lot of pictures on the internet or whatever source you can find (booklets, rule books, boxes etc). I chose not to follow the official

Step 2: Colors Blocked

Step 2: Colors Blocked on the Archers, as seen from various angles

Step 2: Colors Blocked on the Warriors, as seen from various angles

color scheme.

Here is the list of colors I used for this step: - “Caledor Blue” - “Gorthor Brown” - “Dryad Bark” - “Mournfang Brown” - “Leadbelcher” - “Balthasar Gold”

For the archers, I wanted to keep the same colors, but not to have them look exactly as the other. Be super careful with the ripped

Step 3: Washes, on the Archers

trousers, you want the bones to be seen from underneath the clothes, so be precise, if you cover these parts with unwanted colors, just correct afterwards!

So I just painted one pair of trousers and one jacket with “Caledor Blue” (base) and for the remaining, I used “Gorthor Brown” (layer, so thinner, but works well even thinned down). All colors are painted with two thin coats.

Step 3: Washes, on the Scythes

Step 3: Washes, on the Warriors

I painted all boots and gloves with “Dryad Bark” (base), once again with two thin coats. For the bows, quivers, belts and straps, I used “Mournfang Brown”. The extreme parts were painted with “Leadbelcher”.

For these warriors, I used the same colors, and respected the same color scheme. I am relatively new to “Mantic” games, but I suppose they should look like old Basilean soldiers. This is what I suppose when I looked at a few pictures from “Kings of War” and then saw the “Zombies” from “Dungeon Saga”.

Respect the same steps on both sides of the mantle, gloves, boots and belts. This time I mixed some “Chaos Black” in equal quantity to “Caledor Blue”, with a drop of water. Two thin coats of this mix was applied on the trousers.

For the sword, I painted the hilt with “Balthasar Gold” (still base) and the blade with “Leadbelcher”. Finally, the shield was base coated with “Mournfang Brown”, and then I painted the metallic details with “Leadbelcher”. Remember to apply two thin coats, with thinned down water.

Once again, if you cover unwanted parts with the wrong color, just correct afterwards. Also, remember the ripped trousers!

After this step, this is what it should look like:

The next step gives more depths to the miniatures and is fairly easy to accomplish: washes. Washes are inks that have a great amount of water in them, allowing the shade to go into the recesses of the miniatures and leaving the rest (almost) unchanged. The only trick is that you want a good amount of ink on the miniatures but do not dip the

brush too much and have the ink drop on the miniatures. So every time I wash any model, I use my palette to control how much ink I have on the tip of my brush, then just poke it on the surfaces I want covered. In general, I use a small base brush or even a "detail" brush from Army Painter. A trick I use if some wash goes on a wrong surface, is to use a dry brush and just put it on the drop of wash you do not want. The brush will suck it up.

Here is a list of the shades applied on the miniatures: "Seraphim Sepia" "Nuln Oil" "Agrax Earthshade"

These skeletons show best how the bones change color once the "Seraphim Sepia" has been applied. Just be careful not to cover the wooden part of the scythe. For the scythe, I applied "Agrax Earthshade" and some "Nuln Oil" for the blade itself. Again, be careful not to cover parts you don't want covered, be as neat and steady as possible. This one is very easy!

These warriors have a bit more detail (trousers especially). Here I used "Nuln Oil" for the blue parts (trousers and cloak from the outside), all metallic parts and dark leathers. The wooden parts are washed with "Agrax Earthshade", as well as the inside part of the cloak. Be very careful for the shield, you don't want washes to mix! Also, for the holes on the trousers, it is okay if some ink goes on the bones, it should be more shadowy on the inside!

I used the same color/ink scheme for the archers. It can seem tricky to wash the quiver over the blue shirt, but you can correct it with a dry brush. Once again, the trousers can be a bit tricky, but it's fine once corrected, if need be.

Step 4: Highlight bones, on Scythes

Step 4: Highlight bones, on Archers

It is now that the fun really starts! The step I am about to try to explain is that of the highlights. It can be quite a long process, depending on the amount of details on the miniatures and depending on the time you want to spend on that. It can be difficult, but once you master your movements over the miniatures, you can get some very beautiful

Step 4: Highlight bones, on Warriors

Step 5: Highlight Leathers, on Warriors

results and give many many details on texture, lights and so on. To be honest some models really make me struggle and at times, I find myself a bit shaky and hesitant.

Before rushing into the highlights it is very important looking at the miniatures so you can "read" the surfaces (is it clothes, metals, skin or any other material), where do

Step 5: Highlight Leathers, on Archers

Step 6: Wash Arrows

surfaces start/stop (for example, I found leathers on these skeletons a bit hard to "read"), and how does light can affect your painting scheme. I am not going to explain in detail the principles of lights, glazes and so on, because it is not the aim here. So to make explanations clearer, I'll tackle the easiest example of highlights (which is also the first surface I highlighted): the bones.

First, this is the list of "layers" I used for my highlights: "Ushabti Bone" "Skrag Brown" (-ish, I'll explain) "Retributor Armor" "Liberator Gold"

A highlight allows you to show the details of most prominent area (generally surfaces hit by light). Here, you can see the details of the bones of these skeletons. Basically, you want to use a fine detail brush for these surfaces. You also want your paint to be thinned down because it can be long and you don't want your brush to be dry.

So I took a small quantity of "Ushabti Bone" and tried to trace some lines following the most prominent areas. The skull is a bit more difficult, just think about how you would draw a skull, and the lines you can give to make it look like a skull.

Those with scythes are fairly easy to paint, but the others take a bit more time, especially when there are holes on the trousers. Be patient, less paint is better than too much, if necessary, repeat the highlight twice to have a nice cover on these areas.

At this point, you will need to be as steady as possible and really neat, because if you cover any recess, you will have to go back to the base color applied then the wash to start the highlight again.

This is a good example of a highlight applied after a base and a wash. You should still see the shade in the recesses, and in between

Step 7: Highlight Golds, on Archers

these recesses and the most prominent areas you should still be able to see a bit of the base color. Cloaks and robes are quite easy to highlight too (you might remember an article in a previous issue where I painted Banshees and Wraiths – this is a good example).

Step 7: Highlight Golds, on Warriors

Frankly, leathers gave me a hard time. I already mentioned the "readability" of models, and I thought quivers and the belts kind of tricky.

For this step, I used a mix of "Mournfang Brown" and some yellow, trying to get some kind of "Skrag Brown" (I recommend you use this color and not a mix, unless you want something specific). I was simply running short of it, and painting too late to go to my local shop.

The principle is the same as for the bones, but here, you will follow the edge of the surfaces and cover them with a highlight. It is okay for the quivers, but a bit tricky for the belts, so you can simply trace a line on the upper parts of them, since it's where light would hit. I am opening a brief parenthesis concerning the feathers of the arrows, I only started them at this stage using two steps kind of reversed... I first applied a highlight of "Ushabti Bone" and then washed those with "Agrax Earthshade".

The last step mainly consists in highlighting golden metals, but also painting them when they are small surfaces. If you looked at the pictures carefully, you probably noticed that iron metal received a particular treatment to simulate rust. I should probably work my golden metals to receive a similar treatment but did not read anything on that yet, so my golds look too shiny compared to the irons. Also, I should certainly work the bones to show the ages gone, the dust accumulated, but once again, did not read anything on the subject yet, which makes me consider them done for now. But as skeletons can rise multiple times, I will come back to them multiple times...

Before highlighting these surfaces, you should first read the models, and define where you want some gold to show... You

Step 8: Applying rust to the Scythes

The finished Undead monsters

can spot a medal holding the warriors' cloaks, and also some buckles on the belts we should be able to see. These, as well as the hilts have been painted with “Retributor Armor”, then washed with a drop of “Agrax Earthshade” (this shade achieves some miracles really!!!). The highlight only consists in a drop of “Liberator Gold” on the most prominent area of the surface.

Now for the rusty effect, let me introduce the Dalton brothers from a classic dungeon crawler some of you will recognize! For this step you will need: “Dryad Bark” “Jakaero Orange” “Ironbreaker” “Nuln Oil”

Each of these skeletons show a step in the achieving of this effect, remember the basic color you had has just been washed with “Nuln Oil”.

The first skeleton has been poked with a large brush with some “Dryad Bark”. The paint should be as dry as when you dry brush, but instead of brushing the surface, you will poke it without being too careful where you hit the blade. Remember to leave some metallic paint to show through this step! The second one was poked with a medium size brush, with some dry “Jakaero Orange”, this time you will poke similarly, but smaller areas, so you still see the previous coat. The third one received a very “gentle” dry brush of “Ironbreaker”. I insist on the word “gentle” since you still want to illuminate the blade but again, you want to keep the rust visible. It is not so much a question of highlighting the blade but rather tone down the exaggeration of rusty effect. The last one received a very thin wash of “Nuln Oil”, this time thinned down with a drop of water.

This is it! This is how I painted my skeletons for Dungeon Saga... It took some time to finish, and a bit tiring during some steps because of the random readability models have sometimes on some surfaces, but I am happy with this undead group. As mentioned above, I am planning to work on a rusty effect on golden parts as well, and I know one day I’ll come back to all my skeletons to “age” them a bit. I need to get some information on these, and to get the paints that will be required, but this is a very interesting part of our hobby, since these are little details that can give some life to your... undead...▪

HOW TO MAKE SKULLS

By Peter—"Tek Thornisson"

Editor's Note: Peter has been kind enough to send us several terrain-making tutorials for the next few issues. While they don't have step-by-step written overviews, the materials are simple, and a picture (of a tutorial step) is worth a thousand words!

"I work until now only with high-density polystyrene-often colored has a smooth, tough structure.

The only special tool I use is a desktop foam cutter from Proxxon.

The other tools all modelers have at home:

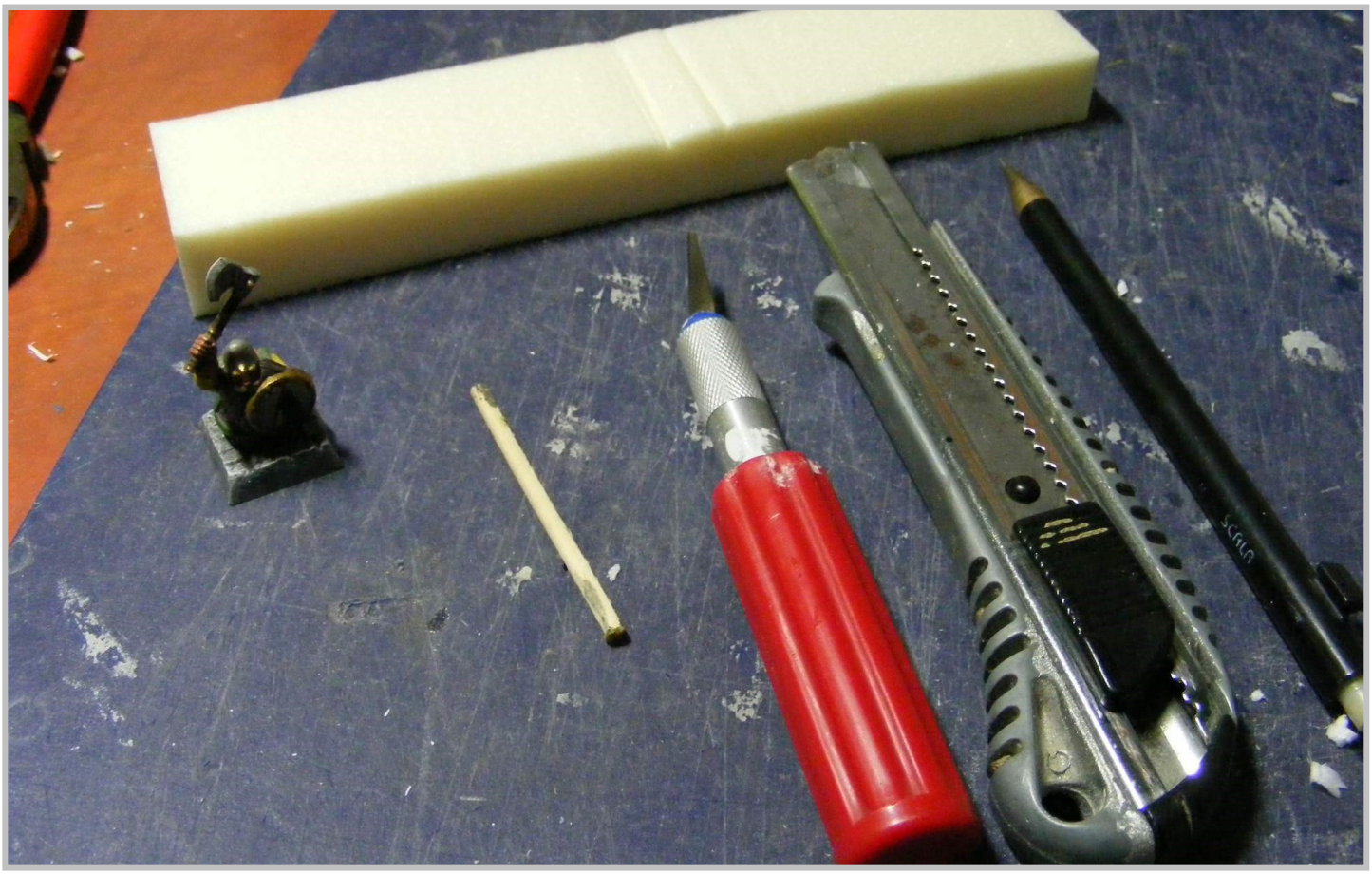
- *Retractable knife*
- *Scalpel with disposable blades (for very detailed cutting)*
- *Brushes*
- *Pencil*
- *Toothpick*

And endless imagination!"

Peter's other notes for this build:

"After some guys saw the skulls on the wall of my fuel depot project, they asked how I created it.. So I decided to make a step by step sculpting tutorial for it!"

The finished Fuel Depot, including the skull wall decoration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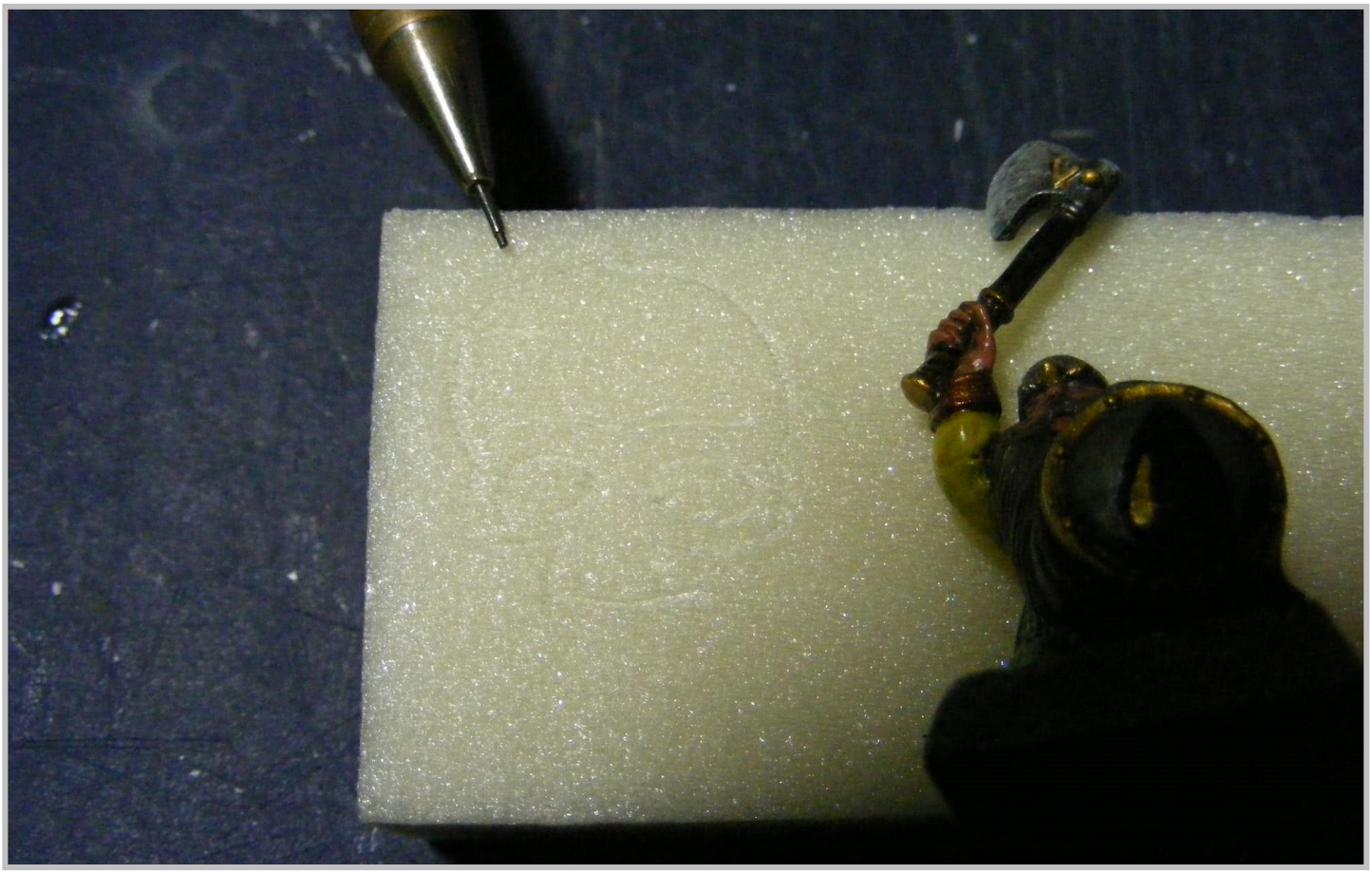
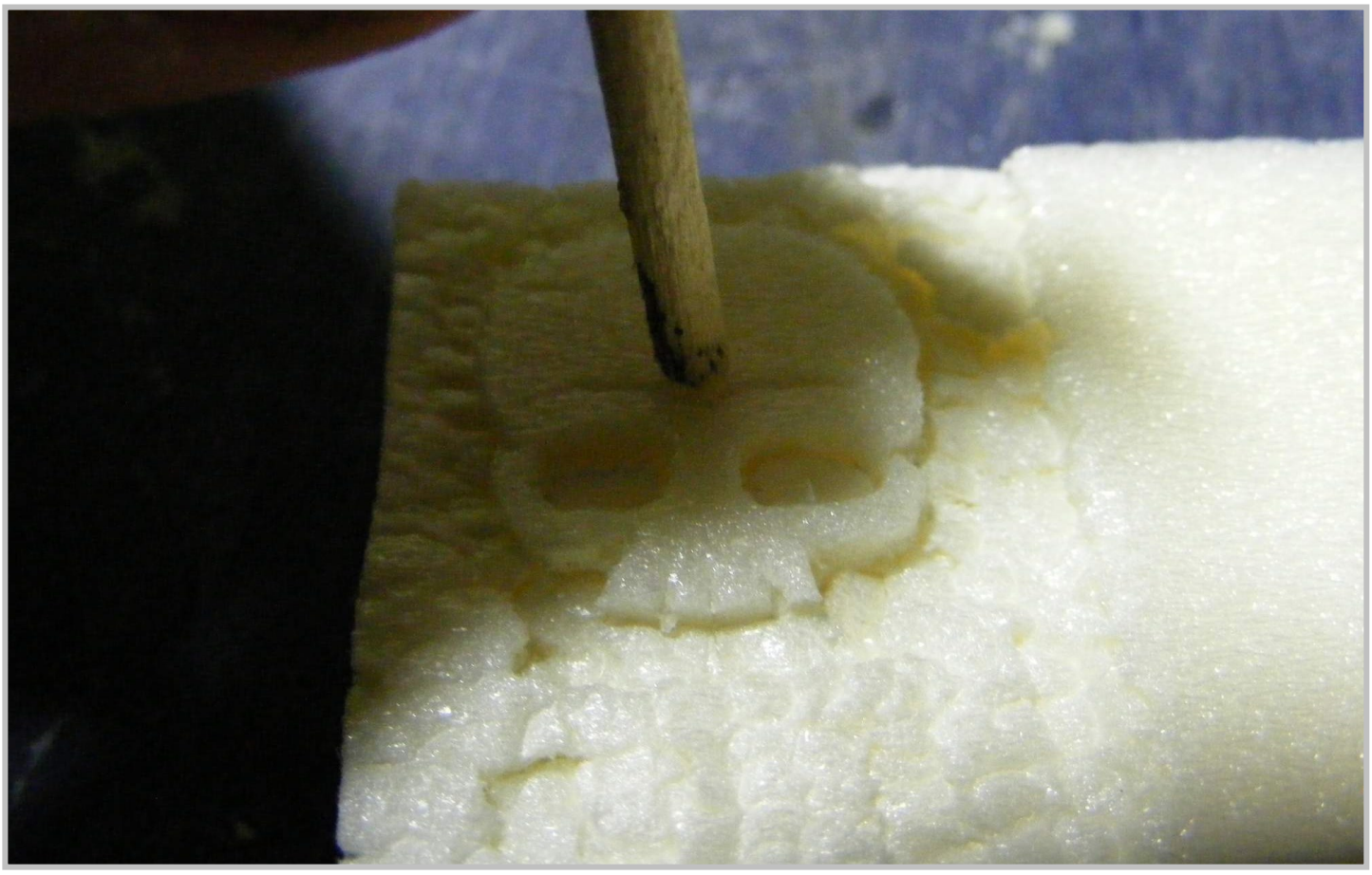
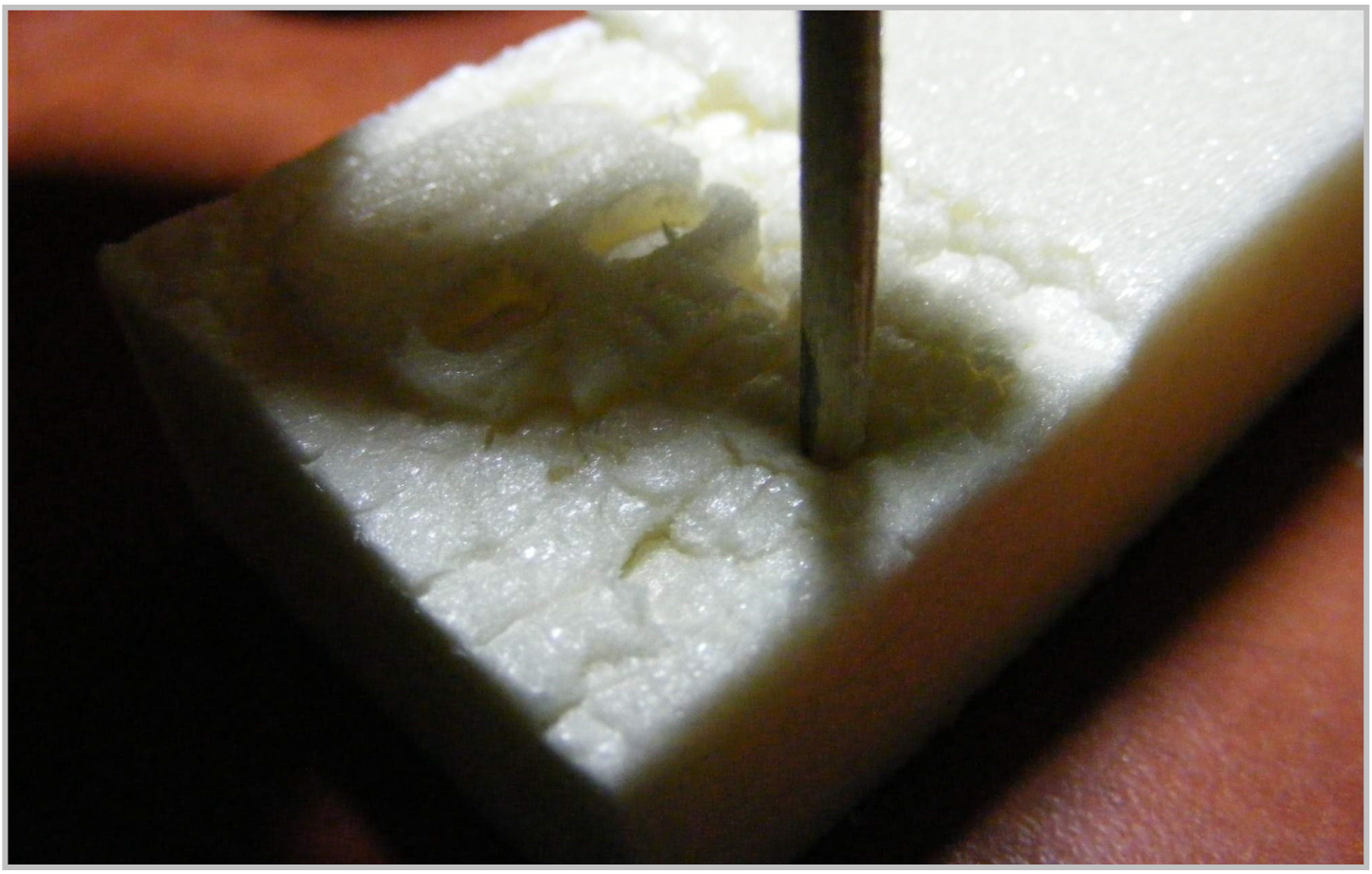
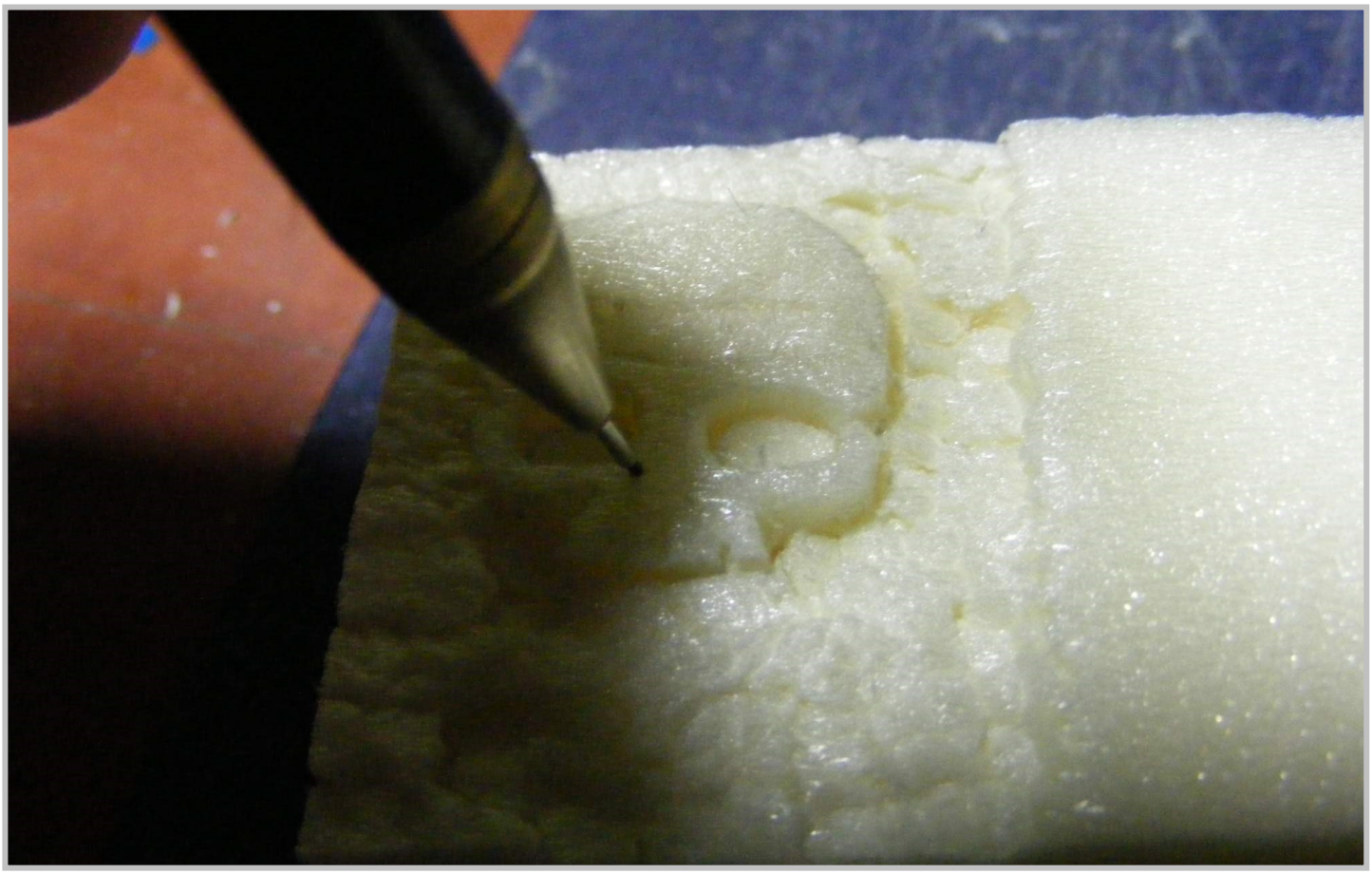
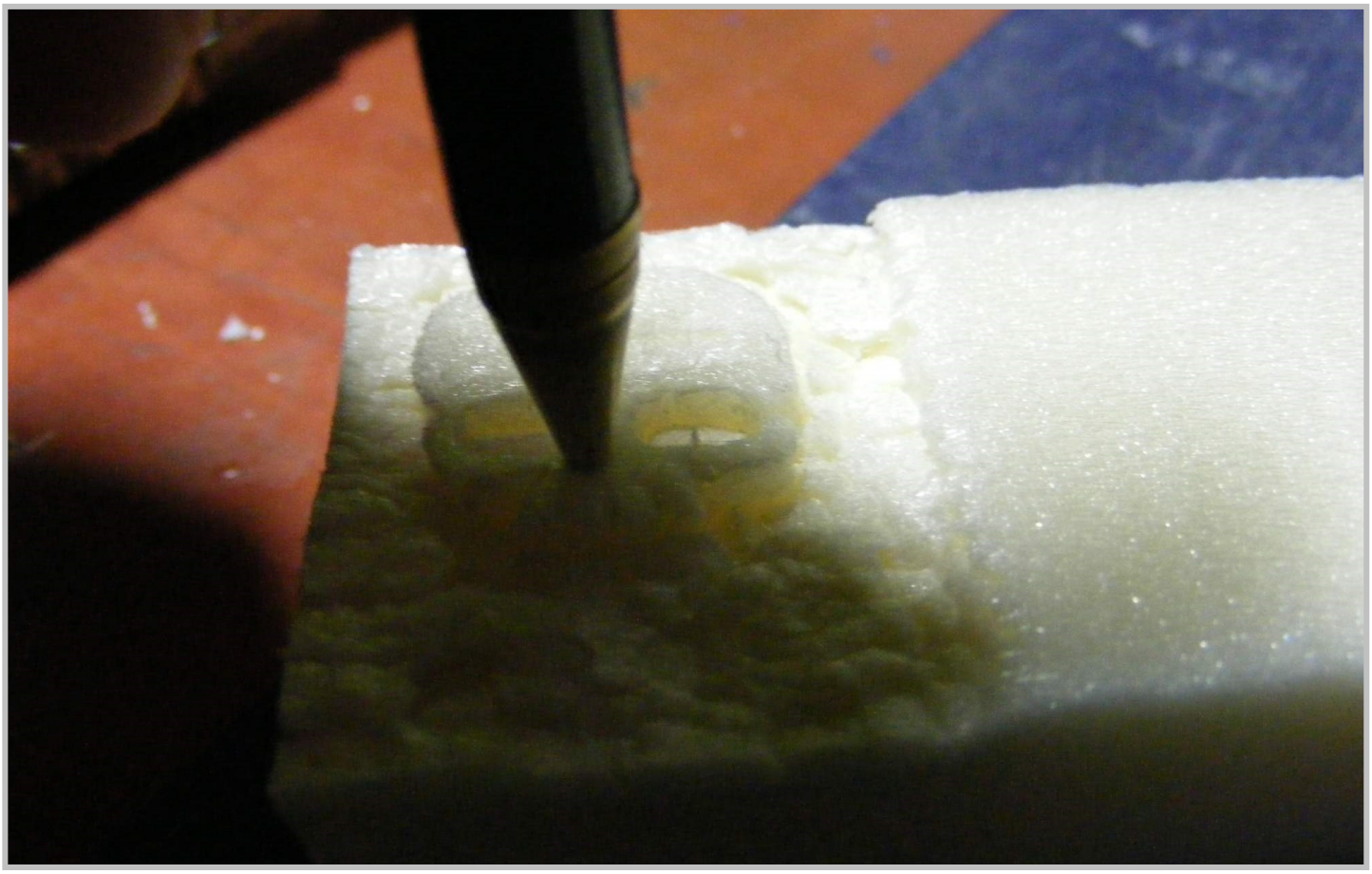
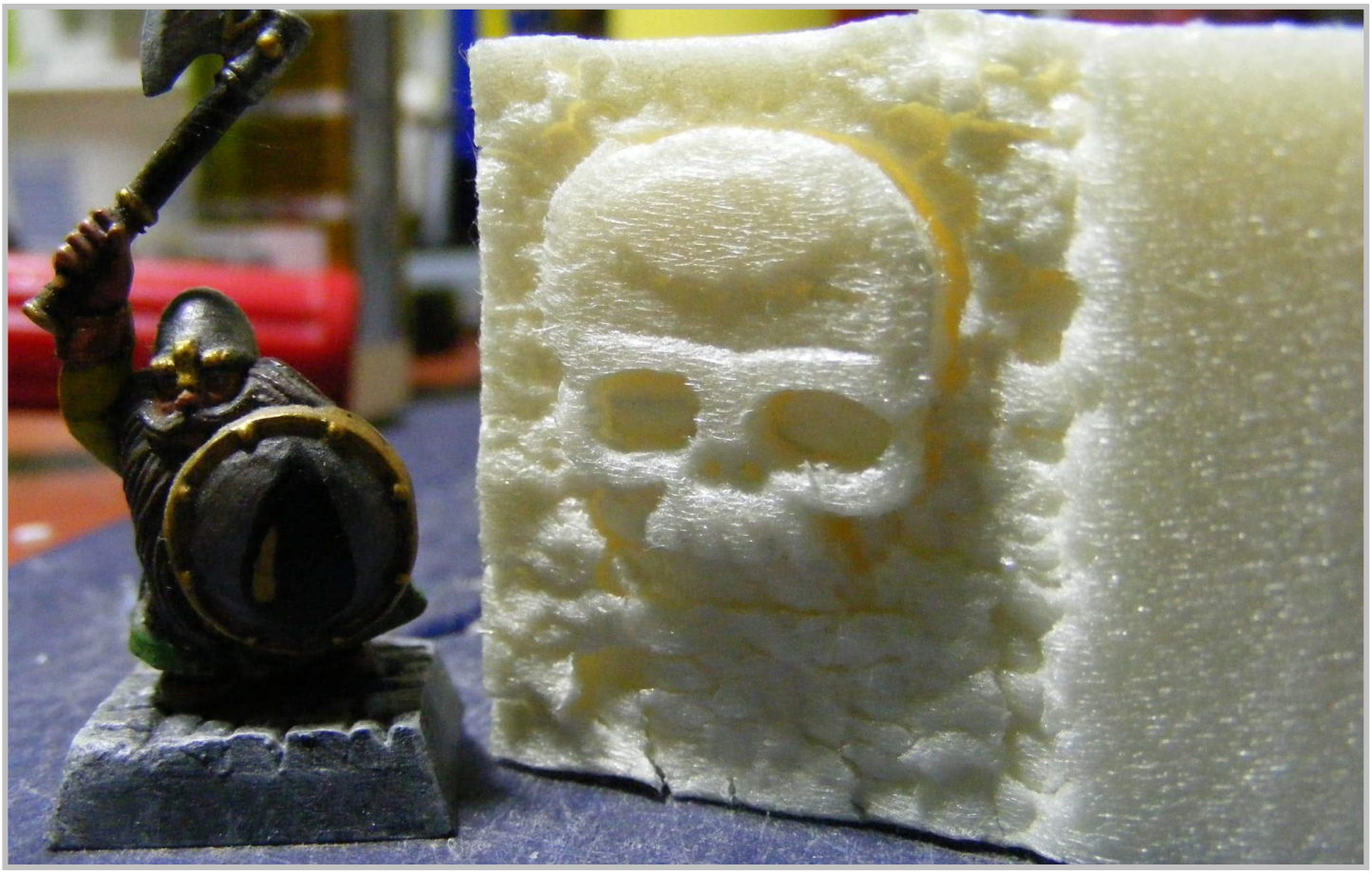












DEADZONE
THE CLEANSING

PART SEVEN

By Matthew Lindsay

Gamma Prime Corporation Headquarters
Location: Gamma Tau, Surface
07:52 hours Earth equivalent

'Clear.'

'Clear.'

'Clear.'

The word echoed within Augustus' earpiece as two Enforcer squads fanned out through the Corporation tower ahead of him, each taking an opposite stairwell, clearing the floors from opposing sides as they went. Voya's squad had remained on the lower floors to secure the entrance.

Dramatis Personae

- *Rylor Ings, Enforcer 8th First Recon Response*
- *Annika Sanne, 'The Fourth', Enforcer 8th First Recon Response*
- *Caelum Augustus, Enforcer Captain of the Gorgon's Fury*
- *Celeste Allenova, Enforcer Interrogator of the Gorgon's Fury*
- *Carthor and Voya, Enforcer Sergeants of the Gorgon's Fury*

Deadzone Enforcer Peacekeepers by "C.M. Minis"

Deadzone Plague by Boris Samec

The server they sought was located on the twenty-second storey out of a total twenty-five. Though having entered the building and discovered the first floor hostile-free, there were still twenty-four more floors to clear before the building could be deemed safe enough to attempt the data extraction.

As safe as anything can be in a Deadzone, thought Augustus.

The three squads had converged on the tower from different approaches, taking no chances with the possibility of the Plague hidden inside. Just as driven as the infection was to seek new victims to spread its foul contagion, it could also recognise locations of importance and defend them as such. The Corporation tower meant nothing to the Plague, but it contained valuable information for the Enforcers, and in some black depth of the Plague's twisted capacity to think, something knew that. The Plague had an uncanny ability to make raids or defensive positions on locations of import.

It knew these locations drew new victims, new flesh for them to feast.

But how such creatures could know when to attack and when to defend, or when to fall back and when to press, no-one truly knew.

At times, the Plague was a ravenous howling mob. At others, it displayed a sophisticated understanding of warfare tactics. Augustus had experienced that insidious resourcefulness first hand and it was this evidence of battlefield strategy which fuelled the theory that the Plague was a biological weapon intended for genocide. Each stage of the Plague had its role in propagation and these roles seemed hard-wired into the perverse DNA itself. No simple infection – regardless of its severity – was so capable, nor so dangerous. Furthermore, the discovery of Plague Stage Three's piloting space craft and using weaponry was proof enough that some level of intelligence was present; the infection 'gifted' its victims with an understanding of the operation of weapons and vehicles that went well beyond any explanation of retention of personality and memories.

So while the circling shuttle that Augustus had ordered to provide intel support from above continued to provide the same updates as before – that the Plague was focussed on the remaining civilian bastions – the Enforcers took no chances and swept through the building, clearing each room as they went.

Deadzone Plague by "Boston Miniatures"

Deadzone Enforcers by "C.M. Minis"

And from each storey the same message was delivered: 'clear'.

The shuttle gives us an advantage, thought Augustus. *But it is not an all-seeing eye, and should the Plague be moving through the buildings, we would not know.*

Most Corporations had inherent shielding built into their habtainers, preventing all but the most powerful scanning technology from penetrating. In the cutthroat world of business politics knowledge was power, and every Corporation building was a potential wealth of knowledge. And so, due to corporate paranoia, the support shuttle only had eyes on the streets and public spaces.

The Gorgon's Fury stationed in orbit had the necessary hardware to scan the habtainer interiors but the few minutes it would take to do so and relay that information meant it would be nigh on useless. The Plague could move several buildings before they were informed it was even approaching.

No, the habtainers shielding was too strong for continual scanning and Augustus did not want his Enforcers relying on a crutch. Especially a delayed one. They had to know they were alone, reliant on themselves, as they were trained.

The Captain almost wished they had met resistance. *Do not look unfavourably upon favourable circumstances. But only a fool would blindly accept them,* he recalled from his training days. *And in all my experience, there is something wrong here.*

This speculation played out in his mind as he walked the stairs behind the vanguard.

Why was the Plague not here? Why had they met no resistance at all? The central tower was a location of importance to many, not just the Enforcers. Scavengers, mercenaries and rebels would inevitably come to plunder this world. Many would be here already, looting anything of value.

Augustus thought: *The Plague would surely know this. It has on previous worlds.*

So why not now?

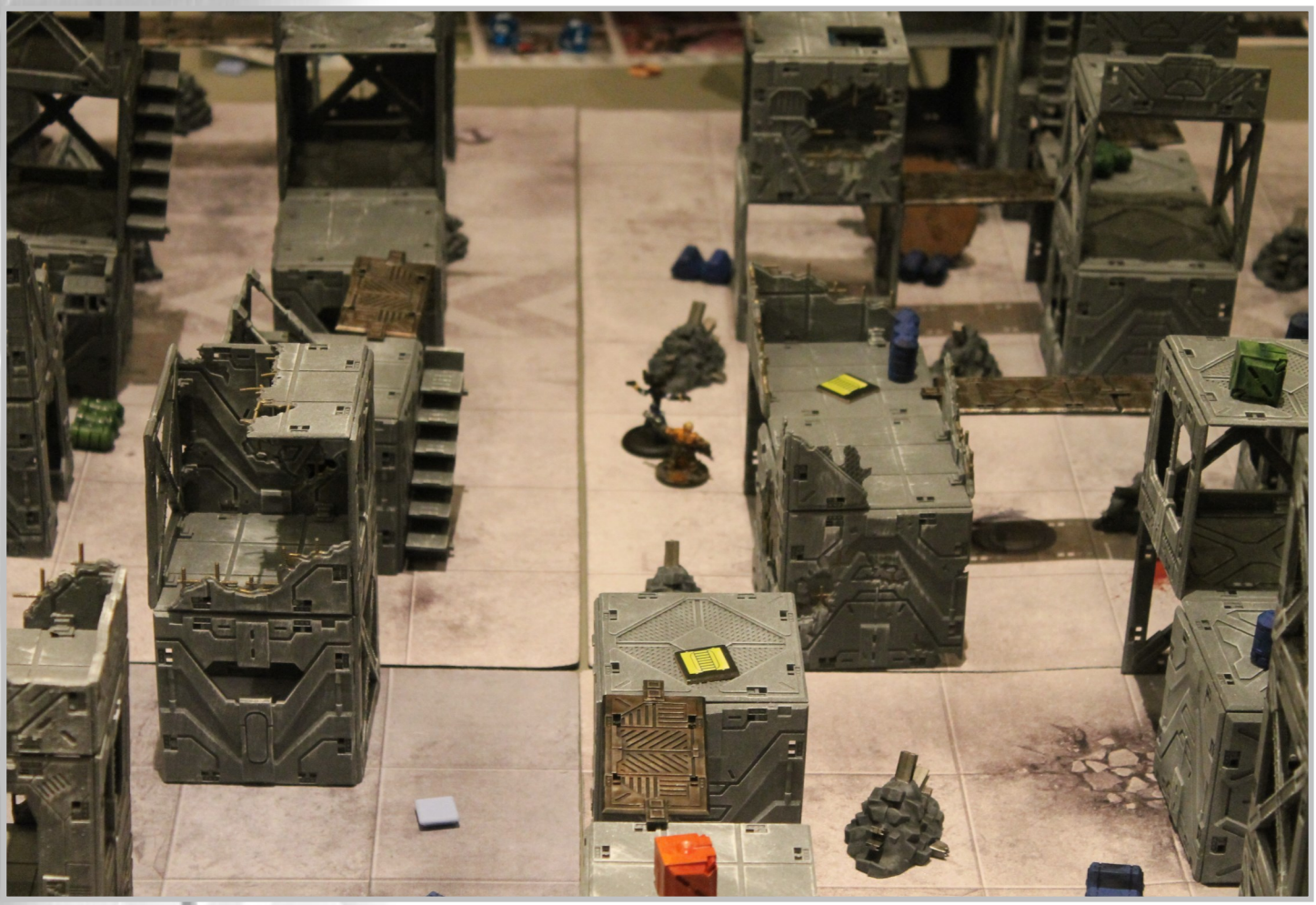
Gamma Tau continued to pose questions to which Augustus had no answers. An unusual sensation rose within him; seeping from the belly of his gut to his cool logic of his mind, hazily drifting upward like the cloud of smoke from the crater of a shell, obscuring all in its path.

It took him a moment to realise what the impact was.

It was doubt.

For so long he had fought in the surety he was informed of everything that pertained to his objectives. He was not concerned with wider politics or possible consequences beyond what his superiors and the Council of Seven informed him. He was an Enforcer, the iron gauntlet of humanity curled into a fist, the will of the Council made flesh and armor. Politics and subterfuge were both beneath and beyond him.

Deadzone terrain by Jamie O'Toole



Deadzone terrain at Adepticon 2015, courtesy of Mantic Games

But all the while, Gamma Tau stank of politics. It positively reeked of it.

A frontier world with an Artefact; an Enforcer who betrayed their own; a shadow military which they had not yet encountered.

And now this: an open doorway to the information they desperately sought.

'Clear.' That word sounded again.

Much like Rylor Ings had theorised, the conditions were unnervingly favourable. *Too favourable,* Augustus' gut instinct said. His pulse began racing. *They are too favourable! Most would not question them in the midst of a Deadzone, such circumstances demand speed. The First Recon squad had not questioned and had been killed for it.*

At each turn their unknown enemy had predicted their movements: First Recon was first to respond to the outbreak. They were shepherded into Gamma Prime and then betrayed for the Artefact. The betrayal came from within. Annika Sanne's records were then encrypted and wiped with only the human error of a name misspelling to thank for proof of her existence at all.

Furthermore, Rylor Ings had spoken of a shadow military. While there was no physical evidence supporting this, absence of evidence was not evidence of absence. Celeste had cleared him in interrogation; that was proof enough he was telling the truth.

Annika had taken the Artefact for some reason, reason enough to attempt to kill the father of her child and turn her back on everything she had ever known.

She had not gone insane. Augustus was sure of it. Her actions were too calculated.

So, on the likely assumption that Annika had taken the Artefact for some reason other than her own worship, that meant in turn, she had taken it for someone else.

The enemy was moving in the shadows, and without Rylor Ings, they would be entirely unaware of their foe. It was only Rylor's testimonial, and his sealing of the shuttle, which had preserved the proof of Annika's betrayal. Rylor survived when he shouldn't have: He pointed the Enforcers in the direction of Annika when she would have been assumed lost. Her armor signal was silent, presumed dead. But Augustus knew now she had likely abandoned it, though such an act would be unthinkable had the unthinkable not already occurred.

Many questions. No answers.

Yes, it was doubt he felt, Augustus realised. But it was not doubt in his abilities, nor those of his squad.

It was doubt as to the validity of this situation.

This had been the test of his theories: Had they met resistance then the Plague's modus operandi would not have changed. While any form of resistance would have made their job more difficult by tenfold, for once engaged their enemy would swarm, but he could have been confident then that they were not being led into a kill zone.

Instead he was being asked to believe that the Plague had fundamentally changed its methodology of battle.

Deadzone Reb Zees by Nicodemus Sandberg

Deadzone Enforcers by Paul Mullis

Could an infection, a mutation, a biological weapon, whatever it was – could such a thing change its natural (or unnatural) function? Yes, it could adapt, in the same way animals adapt to their surroundings or aliens to human culture. But such creatures remain bound by their genetic coding and cannot progress beyond, history and evolution taught this. All mutations eventually die and the Plague was no different: once the infected world was devoured the contagion consumed itself and left no trace save the ruination of a civilisation; lost until man's conquest of the stars.

But – and here it was, that terrible, terrible query – could the Plague learn?
Could it, truly, evolve?

Were they watching it do so?

As the Captain strode higher through the building, placing one heavily armored boot after the other, the weight of his rifle solid and reassuring in his hands, Augustus' thoughts were pulled back to the conundrum he faced.

Augustus had remained silent during the shuttle descent to Gamma Tau, as Rylor had expunged his philosophy of life and death, for the Captain's mind was awash with the very real possibility he was leading his troops into the certainty of the latter. Augustus had narrowed his theories, dismissing the unlikely and weighing up the possible. He considered the mysteries and half-truths and speculations of the Plague. He used logic to form scenarios that as a soldier, he could answer. He distilled his thoughts into one, simple, question.

Knowing everything that had happened on Gamma Tau, which was more likely: that the Plague had evolved or this situation was orchestrated?

And as Augustus had asked himself that question, he realised already knew the answer.

His comms crackled into life, anchoring his thoughts to the present. 'Server located,' came Celeste's voice, her eloquent speech unmistakeable.

There was no time to waste. He took the stairs two at a time, pushing past the Enforcer in front of him and reaching for his comms.

'Crack that server quicker than you ever have before, 02. Force through any security. I do not care how much other data is lost as long as we get that flight path.' His response was quick, his breathing quicker as he bounded up the stairs. 'All Enforcers, defensive positions with a view to exit. We are leaving the instant we have secured the data.'

Augustus vaulted the final steps to the sever floor, his squad behind him, weapons ready. The Enforcers had to get this data and leave as quickly as possible. Politics was an unfamiliar battlefield, but his was the mind-set of a solider. For two weeks in orbit he had considered naught but the most important fact: the enemy knew how they fought.

Forgefather Forge Guard by Peter Grose

Deadzone terrain by Adam Morrow

The enemy had turned a First Recon Enforcer.

Decades of training and warfare strategy drilled into him had become worthless. Whatever theories could be conjured as to the Plague's behaviour, there was no doubting that Annika Sanne could likely predict the Enforcers response. She knew the procedure they would follow.

And Augustus had been forced to lead his troops into the Deadzone, unable to answer the one, vital, question.

How would she stop it?

Arriving at the twenty-second storey Augustus found Sergeant Carthor stood by the entrance to an interior enclosure: a floor-to-ceiling mesh wire fence dominated the room, running half its length and width, corridors either side. The remaining Enforcers had taken positions along the windows and were silhouetted by the sunlight, the unmistakeable lightness of Rylor Ings' armor among them.

The enclosure protected a network of assorted computers, servers and memory banks laid out in methodical fashion. All were untouched save for the largest one at which knelt Celeste. A small, oblong data-box was jacked in at various points and numerous lights on the obsidian server blinked rapidly as she mined the data.

Tick-tock, Augustus, he thought to himself.

Whereas the rest of the building had felt the full consequences of a containment protocol, laid to waste by either by the Plague or looters, this interior had remained untouched. *As it should. These rooms are built to withstand a siege if needed,* the Captain supposed, admiring with grim satisfaction the workman's effort here. He observed damage marks surrounding the fence entrance were the black paint had been chipped off and the cold metal beneath shined through. Someone, or something, had tried to break in at numerous points. Tried and failed.

Sergeant Carthor nodded as the Captain passed him. Celeste didn't look up as Augustus approached, too intent upon the task at hand. He looked down at the data-box display unit and saw she had begun the rebooting process of the servers. Permanently offline to protect them should the live servers fail or be breached, the process would only be a matter of minutes. But time was not their friend here.

Tick-tock, he thought again.

'15,' he said, privately addressing Sergeant Voya over comms. 'Withdraw all stationed on the ground into the lower floors. Conceal yourselves, but keep eyes on the plaza and every entrance to it. I do not believe our presence here is as unnoticed as it seems. Should anything threaten to disturb us that we cannot hide from, kill it.'

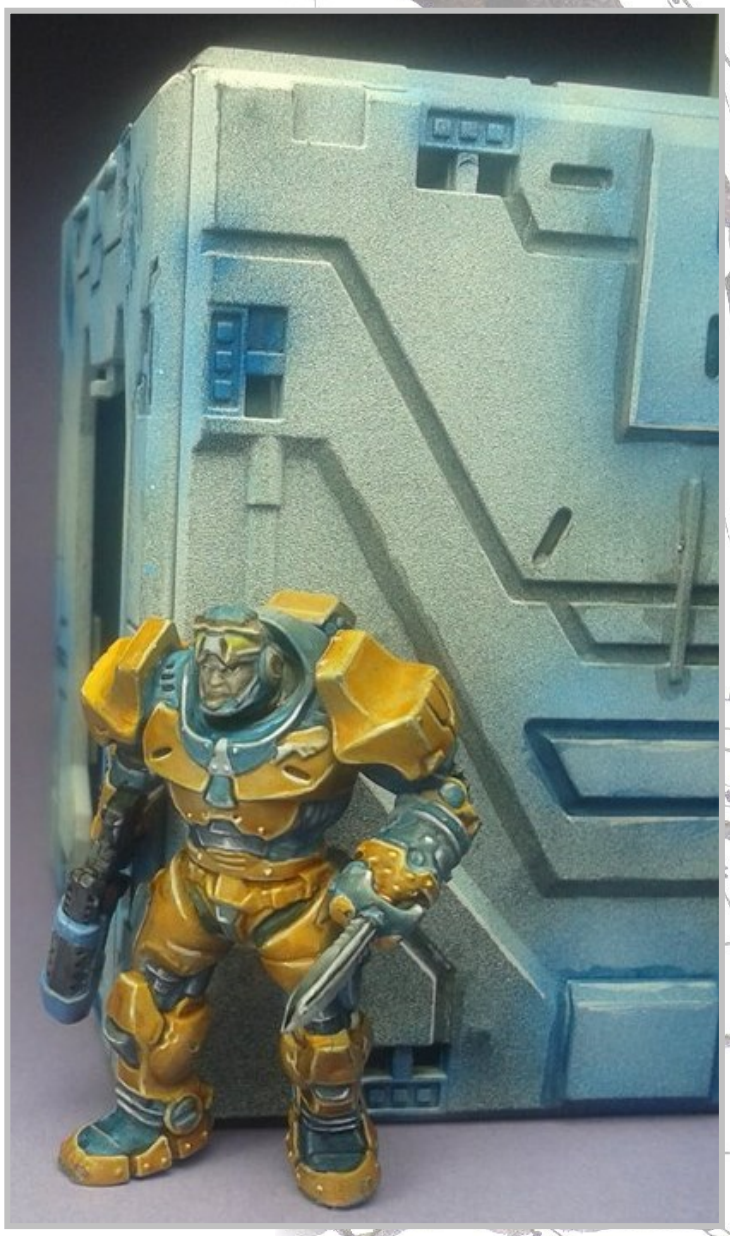
'Acknowledged' Voya responded.

He allowed himself a deep breath, frustrated that he was being manoeuvred so. Even so, what could he have done differently? Annika had played this perfectly. Despite Rylor's survival – presuming she was unaware – she had a failsafe, forcing their hand, ensuring anyone that may come looking for her had to enter the Deadzone. He was being made to choose between two options that both had a high probability of failure: search for her blindly or proceed to into a likely trap.

She had imposed the mathematics of defeat upon him; a most hateful equation. And he did not yet have an answer.

Augustus opened a second private comm channel to Rylor. '07, in your previous deployment, how similar are the circumstances we find ourselves in?'

Deadzone Enforcer Defender by Chris Schlumpberger



Deadzone Enforcer Captain by Loic Boudoya

'Suspiciously so, Captain,' Rylor replied. 'The failed operation encountered no resistance upon entrance to either the city or the Artefact's location. I know our shuttle reports the Plague is focussed on the civilian resistance, and that's to be expected, but still... we're in the middle of the damn Capital. You ever known a Deadzone so quiet?'

'Never,' said Augustus. 'And yet I am unaware of any other course of action we could have taken.'

'Annika is subtle. She is also extremely methodical. She will know we have to come here, and she will have prepared for us to do so.'

He thinks the same as I, thought Augustus. 'This I believe,' he said. 'Your thoughts?'

Rylor looked out across the urban landscape. He knew what he was being asked.

From this elevation he had a commanding view, high enough to see the grey blocks turn to green fields. High enough to almost feel removed from it all, removed from the world beneath. Whenever he stood above a city like this, he was glad to be an Enforcer. The horizon beckoned with unknown possibilities, and he would see them. Always he had enjoyed the sight of a great metropolis, the panoramic view of an artificial skyline testament to the achievements of his race.

But this one he hated. Smoke rose in the distance, permeated with flashes of gunfire. For a moment he wondered if he was witnessing his past, the scene playing out before him, a spectator removed from interference.

What would your wife do? That's what Augustus was asking.

Or, to put it another way, a less personal way, how would he kill twenty-one Enforcers?

'I shouldn't be alive. But I am. I am living proof that Annika does not like loose ends. If we're here it's because she wants us here. Now, Captain, I would have once thought to

never ask this question, but given what's occurred – can you trust all your Enforcers?'

Rylor's words were like a slap to face. A physical blow. Augustus' immediate response was an involuntary curling of the lip and the sharp acidic taste of bile.

No, Rylor should not have to ask that. No Enforcer should even have to consider it. And yet, here they were. The question was a fair if hated one.

Such times they lived in.

'I have fought and killed with these Enforcers for near a decade. I trust them implicitly.'

'I fought with Annika for nine years.' The meaning beneath that sentence hung in the silence between them. 'But we must go off the assumption that your Enforcers are loyal. Otherwise it won't matter, we're all already dead.' Rylor's voice was mechanical, made even more so by the comms reducing his accent, but Augustus sensed the pain buried beneath his words. *Nine years destroyed by a bullet*, he thought. Nevertheless, the Enforcer was functional. The pain was there but it was buried.

'Annika would not be able to confront us directly. She knows this as we do,' Rylor continued. His mind was running through the likely scenarios, estimating the outcome of each. 'There's a private military force somewhere out there but one large enough to challenge us would be difficult to hide in a city. It would have to be large, and the larger it is, the more likely discovery by the Plague. Hiding a force strong enough to ensure victory would be impossible. And she will not settle for anything less than surety.'

Celeste signalled she was halfway done.

Rylor felt pressure begin to build. He steadied his breathing. It only partially

Deadzone Enforcer Pathfinders by Marcel Popik

helped. *Annika was always the superior soldier,* he told himself.

No, that was doubt speaking. It was death speaking.

Life or death, Rylor. Vengeance or the abyss. Focus. Choose.

'A private military force would likely be for security, not aggression,' he reasoned. 'Could Annika risk the Plague turning on them? She fought for her life during the initial attack as well as any of us. Something redirected the Plague during our escape but they sure as hell didn't control it.'

You're skirting the question, Rylor, he told himself. *It's hard to accept she's probably going to try and kill you again, isn't she? So what would you do, if you could guarantee all your foes in one place but could not confront them?*

And then he realised the answer.

'Sabotage,' said Augustus, as if hearing Rylor's thoughts.

'Even though we secured the building – '

'She would know our search techniques,' said Augustus. And with that Rylor confirmed what the Captain had known all along.

What had he been hoping for? Augustus asked himself.

False hope? False security?

Deadzone Enforcer by Jamie O'Toole

A different answer, he told himself. *And yet here we are*.

His Enforcers were still searching the tower and had found nothing.

Augustus thought back to the first briefing he had given after Rylo's interrogation; the one the First Recon trooper himself had stumbled into: 'Annika Sanne will know what we would search for,' he had been telling the Enforcers arrayed before him, each ready to stride into the last breath of a dying planet. 'The building will not be secure. I want every floor searched and searched again for explosives or sabotage or anything that looks even remotely out of place. We must remember, the enemy understands our combat doctrine. They understand our

training. They are the very epitome of it.'

Rylor had walked in at that point, and as every gaze had turned toward him, he had been living proof that Annika's incredible threat was real. *Here he is,* Augustus had thought that day. *The man who should not be.*

'Do you hear that?' said Rylor audibly.

Celeste looked up at Augustus as Rylor spoke. She said nothing, her thoughts hidden behind the shielded lenses of her helmet.

Deadzone Plague Gen 3 by "C.M. Minis"

Silence.

'The fighting has stopped,' said Augustus.

'There isn't even the sound of scavengers anymore. Every planet has scavengers. Carrion birds or vermin. But here… just now, nothing. They've fled. No scavengers means one thing.'

'Plague.'

Nothing more needed to be said. Should they be caught here, inside the tower, they had their backs to the wall.

There was no other way. The mathematics of defeat: either we make our stand here, rats caught in a trap, or we attempt a fighting retreat and be cut down in the streets.

A fighting retreat, such a manoeuvre was costly. Enforcers would die. Perhaps all of them.

But a last stand was suicide.

For who were the circumstances favourable, Augustus? The Captain chastised himself.

To be continued...▪

CHEAP WARPATH TERRAIN

By Brad

Hi everyone, I've been working on some rather interesting, simple terrain, which I made from some old real estate signs. The building terrain look good, and are really, really easy to make.

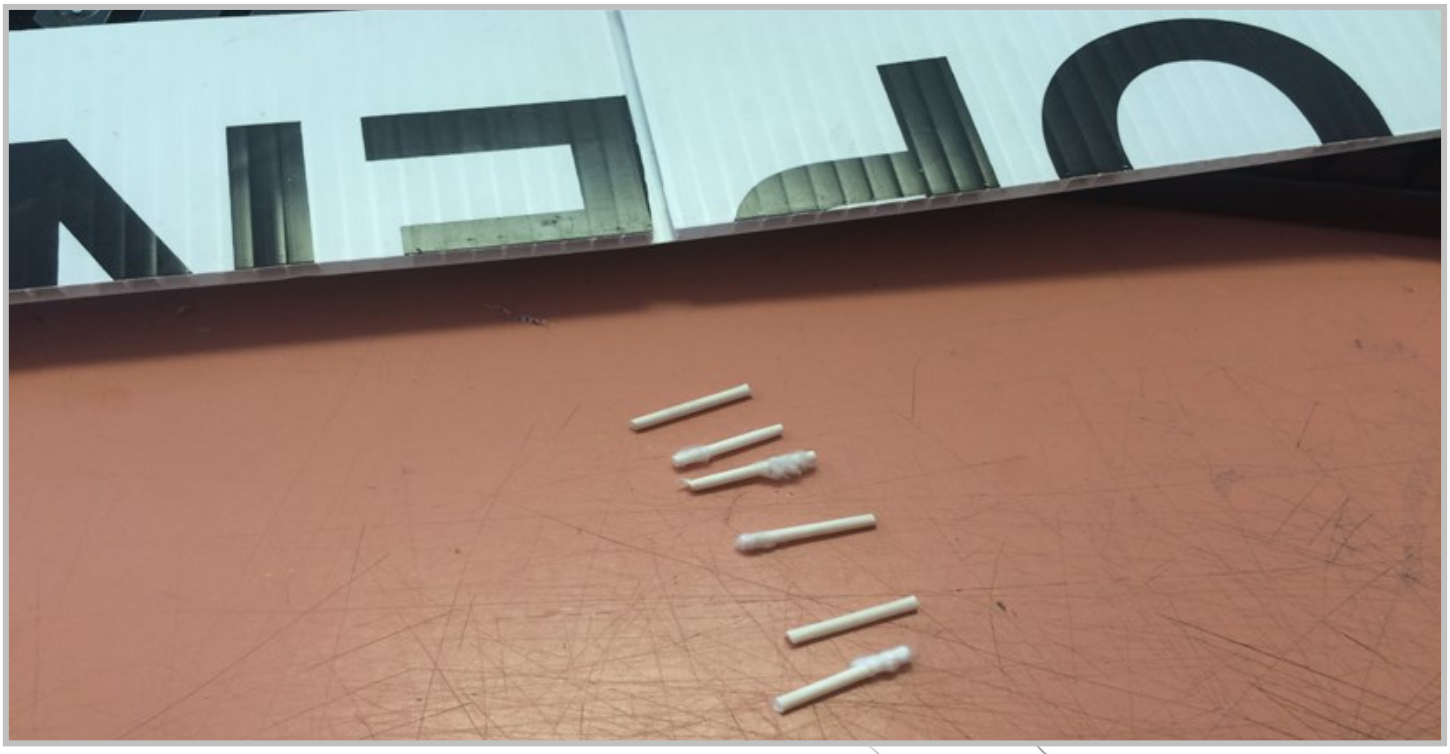
Step 1: Take a real estate rider, which is made out of a piece of corrugated plastic board that is 24 inches long and 6 inches wide, and cut it in half long-ways. See the image above.

Step 2: Find the middle hollow cell and slice only one side, so that the plastic sheet will fold in half. See the image below.

Step 3: Split each individual half into a 5” and a 7” section, again only cutting one flute. See above image.

Step 4: Remove the excess plastic from the sides of the flutes you have cut to minimize excess material.

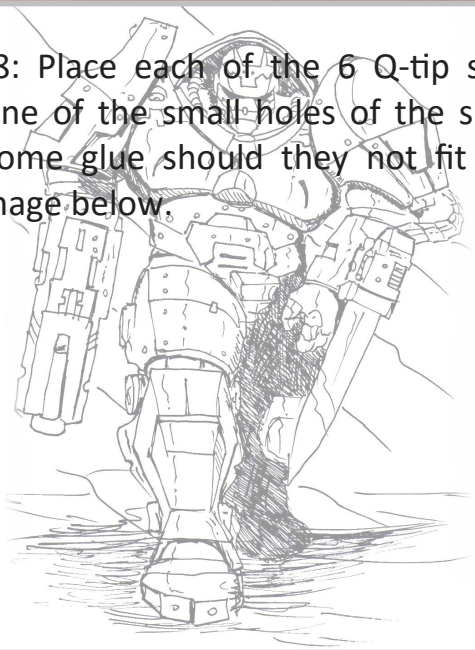
Step 5: Take a second rider (or a section of a larger sign) and cut a piece just below 5”x7”. See below image.

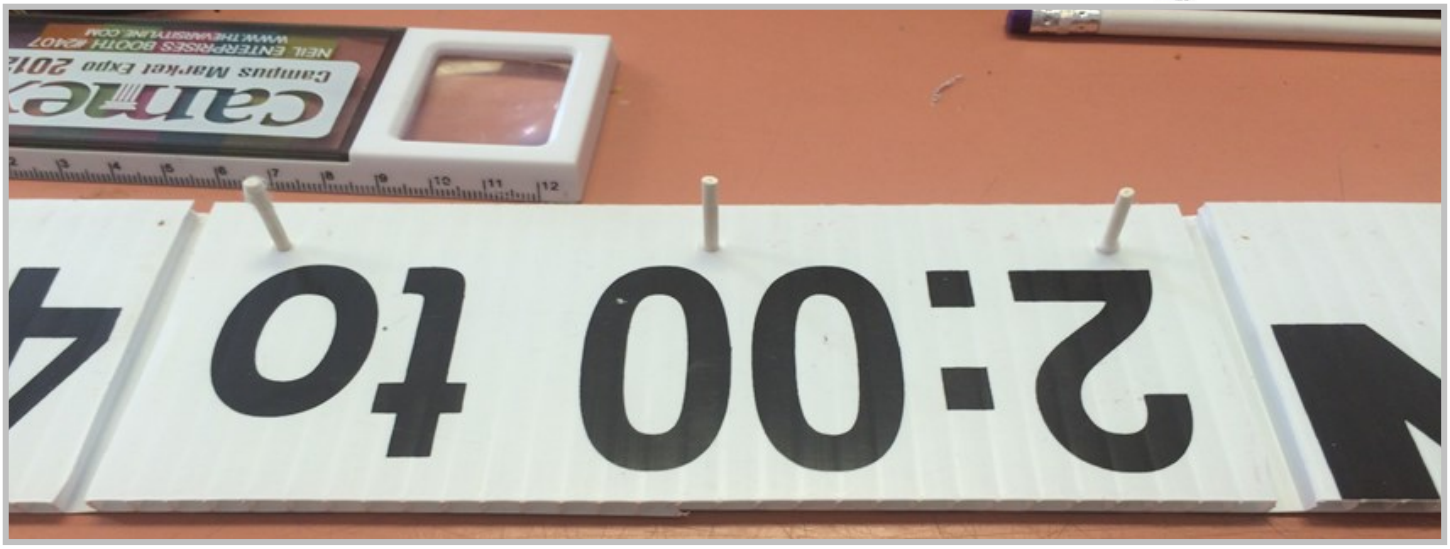


Step 6: Grab 2 Q-tips, remove the cotton from each end, and cut into 3 pieces. They should be about 2cm in length each. See image above.

Step 7: Punch a small hole into the third flute from both edges, as well as the middle flute of the 7” sections of the original sign. These are best placed about a half inch from the top of the material and should be on the side you cut the flutes out of.

Step 8: Place each of the 6 Q-tip sections into one of the small holes of the sign and add some glue should they not fit snugly. See image below.

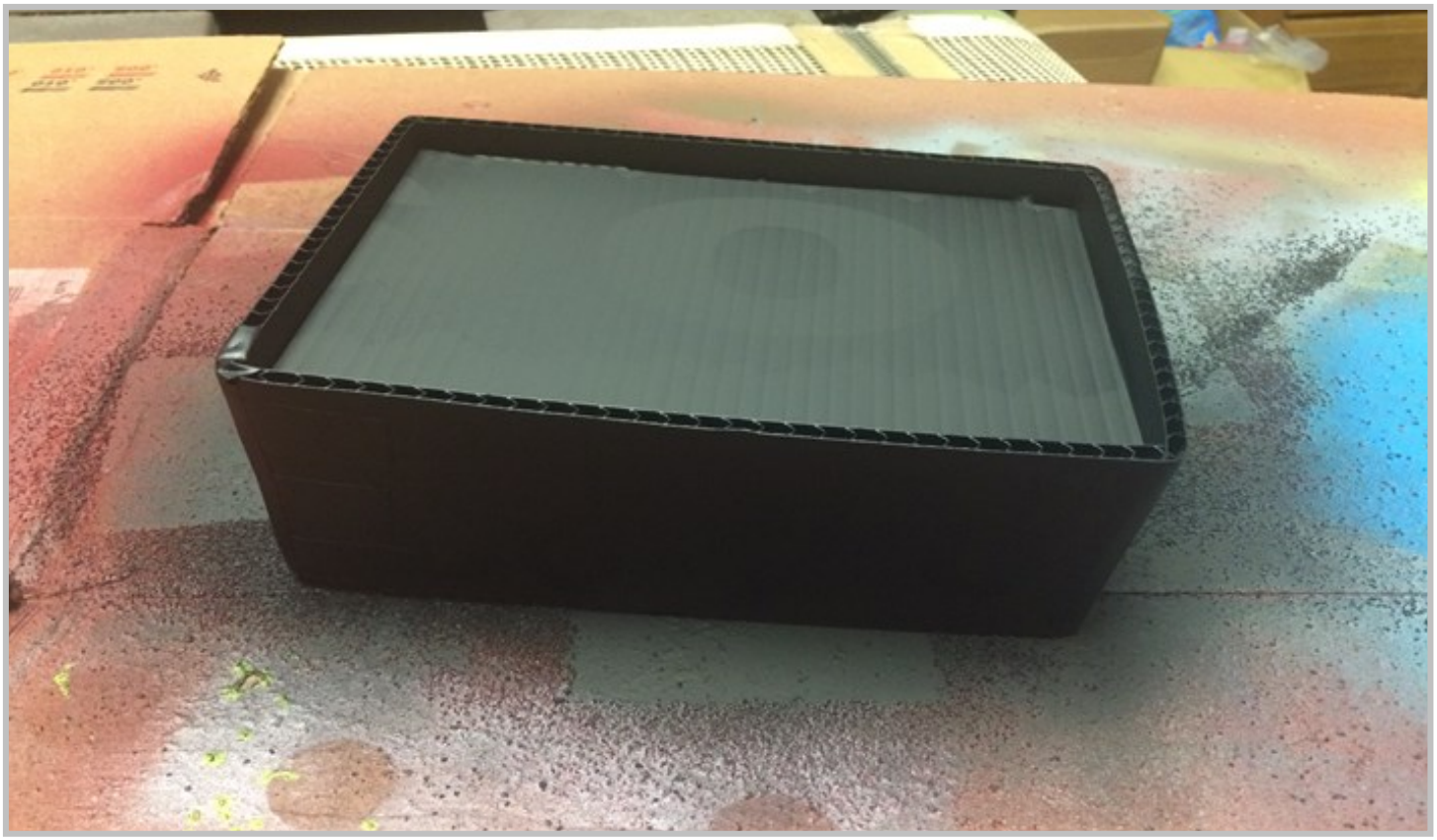


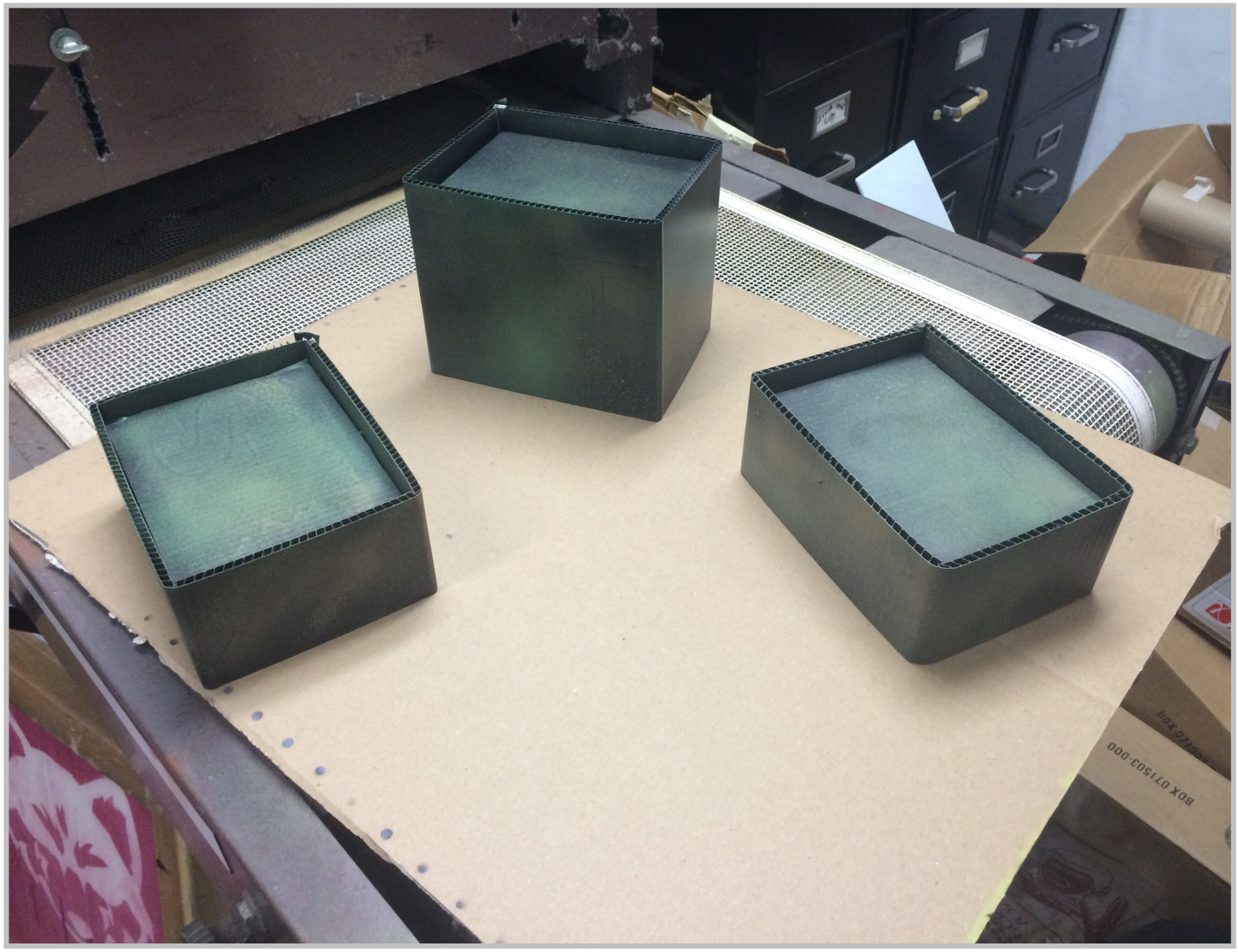


Step 9: Using the Q-tip sections, place the roof on one side of the wrap around walls and wrap with the removed flute sections to the inside. Wrap some tape (I use electrical) around the whole building to hold it together. See image above.

Step 10: Spray-paint the building the color of your choice (I've used black). See image below.

Step 11: Kill some Plague!





An example of a set of finished and ready to use quick terrain!

GCPS Marines, copyright Mantic Games

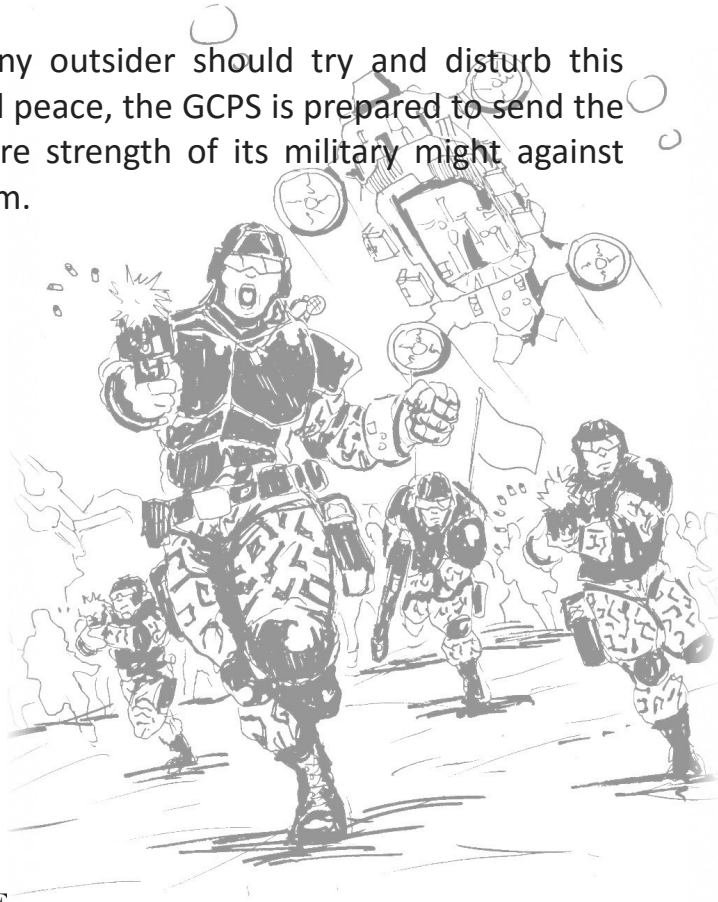
THE GCPS

By Boz Androic

Technically, the Galactic Co-Prosperity Sphere is the most powerful galactic empire on record. In reality, it is a loose conglomeration of thousands of megacorporations, mercantile organizations, and other entities with slightly differing objectives, ideas, and values. And each one of these has at least one military organization to do its bidding. These armed forces all share the same organizational outline, allowing them to appear, on paper, to be a single massive force, entirely under the control of the mysterious rulers of the GCPS, the Council of Seven.

Although confrontations between corporations do exist, they very rarely escalate to armed conflict, and even then, only briefly. It is in each corporations' best interest to keep other corporations alive and well, if for no other reason, then to avoid bringing ruin to itself through the unforeseeable consequences of cause and effect in the labyrintine logistics and production lines of the GCPS.

If any outsider should try and disturb this cold peace, the GCPS is prepared to send the entire strength of its military might against them.



LEADERS

Seasoned Veteran — 26 pts / 3 VPs

S	F	Sv
4+	4+	5+

Pistol: R3
Ceremonial Sword: RF, AP1
Weapon Options:
Small Arms, Elite, Melee
Campaign Ability Options:
Ranged, Melee, Command

Years of experience and insufficient political connections can result in a highly capable soldier still stuck in active rotation, without hope for a promotion.

- *Tactician (2)*

Against All Odds: Spend an Army Special result when one of your models has taken a Shoot action. That model can take a free Shoot action against a target it has not attacked this turn.
Recon: 4+

Ranger Staff Sergeant — 21 pts / 2 VPs

S	F	Sv
4+	5+	5+

Pistol: R3
Weapon Options:
Small Arms, Recon, Melee
Campaign Ability Options:
Ranged, Melee, Command

More than just reconnaissance experts, Ranger Staff Sergeants are experienced small unit commanders in their own right.

- *Tactician (2)*
- *Scout*

Reposition: Spend an Army Special result at any time to move one of your models to another place within the same cube. This does not count as movement.
Recon: 3+

Gunnery Sergeant — 18 pts / 2 VPs

S	F	Sv
5+	4+	5+

Pistol: R3
Stun Baton: RF, *Stun*
Weapon Options:
Small Arms, Melee
Campaign Ability Options:
Ranged, Melee, Command

Officially in charge of special weapon batteries. Unofficially in charge of babysitting Recruits. They invariably carry a big stick, and know how to use it.

- *Tactician (1)*

Hustle Up: Spend an Army Special result at the start of a model's activation. The model and any carried weapons do not have *Heavy* and *Slow Reload* abilities until the end of the model's activation.
Recon: 5+

Sapper Crew Chief — 22 pts / 2 VPs

S	F	Sv
5+	5+	5+

- *Tactician (1)*
- *Engineer*

Shotgun: R2, *Knockback)*
Weapon Options:
Small Arms, Melee, Light (All)
Campaign Ability Options:
Ranged, Command, Specialist

More than just military engineers, Sapper Crew Chiefs are fixers, wreckers, soldiers, entrenchment experts, and talented commanders with practical solutions.

Leave A Gift: Spend an Army Special result when one of your models moves from a cube and leaves it empty. Place a Booby Trap item in that cube.
Recon: 5+

TROOPS

GCPS Marine — 11 pts / 1 VPs

S	F	Sv
5+	5+	5+

Laser Rifle: R6, *Rapid Fire*
Weapon Options:
Small Arms
Campaign Ability Options:
Ranged

The backbone of the GCPS armed forces. The pay isn't good, but it is better than nothing, and the recruitment ad said that opportunities for promotion are plentiful...

Ranger — 12 pts / 1 VPs

S	F	Sv
4+	5+	6+

- *Scout*

Long Rifle: R8
Weapon Options:
Small Arms
Campaign Ability Options:
Ranged

Wearing light armor that emphasizes mobility, Rangers are the first that are sent into the unknown. With higher risk comes higher pay.

Riot Trooper — 10 pts / 1 VPs

S	F	Sv
6+	4+	5+

Pistol: R3
Truncheon: RF
Weapon Options:
Small Arms, Melee
Campaign Ability Options:
Melee

Seldom deployed in any armed conflict, Riot Troopers are most often faced with beating down disorganized resistance.

Recruit — 9 pts / 1 VPs

S	F	Sv
6+	6+	6+

- *Loader*

Laser Rifle: R6, *Rapid Fire*
Weapon Options:
None
Campaign Ability Options:
None

Recruits are bad at shooting, and most other aspects of military life, but they can, in most cases, be trusted to load a mortar shell the right way up.

SPECIALISTS

Marine Specialist — 11 pts / 1 VPs

S	F	Sv
5+	5+	5+

Laser Rifle: R6, *Rapid Fire*
Weapon Options:
Small Arms, Light (All)
Campaign Ability Options:
Ranged, Specialist

Lugging around a heavy weapon does have its perks. Greater pay, for one...

Ranger Marksman — 20 pts / 2 VPs

S	F	Sv
4+	5+	6+

- *Scout*

Sniper Rifle: R12, AP1, *Heavy, Sniper Scope*
Weapon Options:
Small Arms, Recon
Campaign Ability Options:
Ranged, Specialist

The ability to engage targets from a significant distance does wonders for reducing personal risk without reducing pay.

GCPS Veteran — 15 pts / 2 VPs

S	F	Sv
4+	5+	5+

Laser Rifle: R6, *Rapid Fire*
Weapon Options:
Elite, Light (Assault), Melee
Campaign Ability Options:
Ranged, Command

A good amount of experience plus equipment bought with a not-too-shabby paycheck equals one soldier a cut above the rest.

Corpsman — 14 pts / 2 VPs

1-2 | 0 | 1

S	F	Sv
6+	5+	5+

- *Medic*

Pistol: R3
Weapon Options:
Small Arms, Melee
Campaign Ability Options:
Melee, Specialist

Other troops often call them "corpsemen". They pay them back by being stingy with pain meds. It all balances out.

Sapper — 13 pts / 2 VPs

1-2 | 0 | 1

S	F	Sv
5+	6+	5+

- *Engineer*

Shotgun: R2, *Knockback*
Weapon Options:
Small Arms, Light (All)
Campaign Ability Options:
Ranged, Specialist

The Corporate military machine would grind to a halt without crews of military engineers making sure GCPS equipment works, and enemy equipment doesn't.

VEHICLES

GCPS Strider — 30 pts / 3 VPs

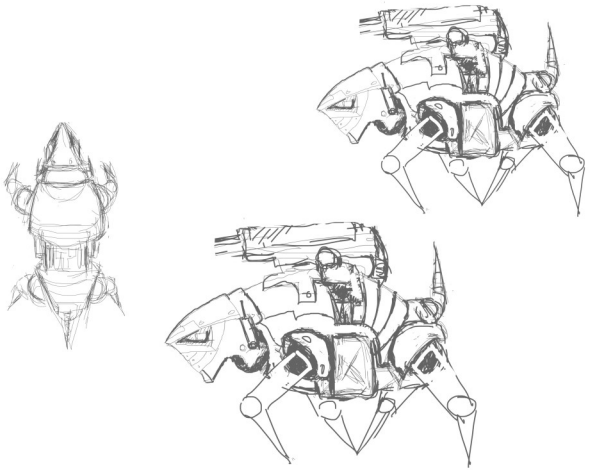
1-2 | 3 | 4

S	F	Sv
5+	5+	4+

- *Vehicle*

Weapon: **Stats**
Weapon Options:
Hardpoints:
2 - Walker (All)
Campaign Ability Options:
Ranged, Melee

The Striders are ubiquitous in modern battlefield, serving in logistics, heavy support, or direct frontline combat roles.



WEAPONS

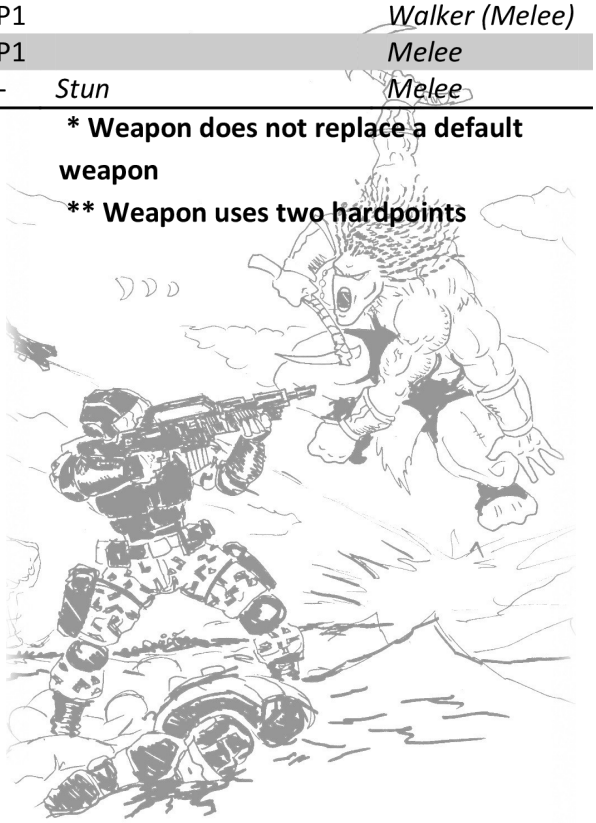
Weapon	Points	VPs	Range	AP	Abilities	Type
Pistol *	0	0	R3	-		*Small Arms*
Shotgun	1	0	R2	-	*Knockback*	*Small Arms*
Laser Rifle	2	0	R6	-	*Rapid Fire*	*Small Arms*
Long Rifle	3	0	R8	-		*Recon*
Sniper Rifle	12	1	R12	AP1	*Heavy, Sniper Scope*	*Recon*
Light Burst Laser	4	0	R8	-	*Heavy, Weight of Fire (1), Suppression*	*Light (Automatic)*
Missile Launcher	8	1	R8	AP5	*Heavy, Slow Reload*	*Light (Explosive)*
Mortar	10	1	R8	-	*Heavy, Slow Reload, Indirect (4)*	*Light (Artillery)*
Flame Thrower	4	0	R2	-	*Volatile, It Burns!*	*Light (Assault)*
Subjugator Rifle	7	1	R8 / R3	-	*Rapid Fire / Frag (3), One Use*	*Elite*
Thermal Rifle	7	1	R3	AP2		*Elite*
Assault Flamer	6	1	R2	-	*Volatile, It Burns!*	*Walker (Assault)*
Burst Laser	4	0	R8	-	*Weight of Fire (1), Suppresison*	*Walker (Automatic)*
Heavy Burst Laser **	11	1	R8	AP1	*Weight of Fire (2), Suppression*	*Walker (Automatic)*
Polaris Cannon (Genling 88) **	10	1	R10	AP4		*Walker (Lance)*
Chainsaw	5	0	RF	AP1		*Walker (Melee)*
Ceremonial Sword	5	0	RF	AP1		*Melee*
Stun Baton	6	0	RF	-	*Stun*	*Melee*

*** Weapon does not replace a default weapon**

**** Weapon uses two hardpoints**

ITEMS

Item	Points	Rarity
Ammo	2	Common
AP Ammo	4	Rare
Frag Grenade	6	Common
Stun Grenade	4	Rare
Smoke Grenade	3	Common
Thermal Mines	4	Rare
Medi-Pack	5	Common
Holo-Sight	8	Rare
Defender Shield	5	Rare
Sentry Gun	8	Rare



Refugees of the Olde Worlde

KINGS OF WAR

2000 point Tournament

October 21-22, 2016
Game Pulse in Rexburg, Idaho (52 East Main Street)

The Olde Worlde is dead, and we have been left holding a mountain of soldiers who no longer have a home to call their own. Come on out and learn about the world of Mantica. Give your troops a new home and lead them to victory on new battlefields!

If you have never played Kings of War or any other square-based fantasy war game have no fear! There are several loaner armies on hand for you to play with, or even if you just want to try something new, if the idea of fantasy war gaming has ever interested you feel free to come out and play.

Entry Fee: $30
There are only **14** slots open for this tournament, once those are filled registration will be closed.

Prizes for the top two armies in 4 Categories!
Best Tactician – Best Dressed (Paint/Modelling) – Players' Choice – Best Overall
1st place prize support for each category is over $100 in *each* area

Door prizes will also be handed out throughout the event including models, paint sets, dice, and other items for the hobby enthusiast.

Primary games will all be played on Saturday the 22nd with an optional bout on Friday the 21st

If interested speak to your game store representative or email refugeesoftheoldeworlde@gmail.com or you can check us out on Facebook, just look up Refugees of the Olde Worlde KoW Tournament for updates and information.

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MARS ATTACKS
THE MINIATURES GAME
GET YOUR COPY NOW AND KICK SOME MARTIAN.... HELMETS
ACK ACK AAAACK!!! ... OR SMASH THIS FILTHY HUMAN RACE FOREVER..... AND DON'T SPARE ANY COW
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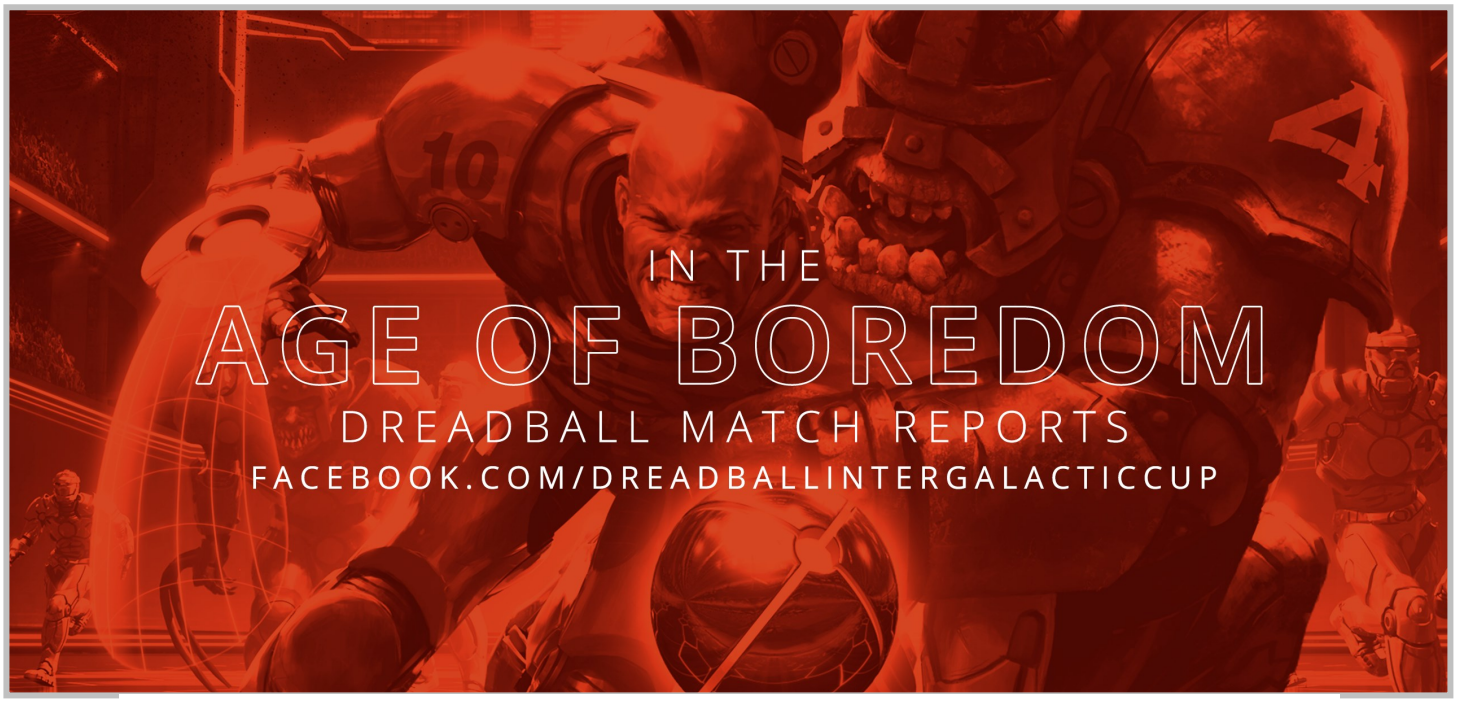

Mantic Radio has become Counter Charge!
Counter Charge! is the first podcast totally dedicated to Kings of War
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Deadzone Enforcers versus Plague Zombies by Paul Mullis

INSIDE:

THE SOULSHARD

Mercenaries face off against demons of the Abyss and the dark Abyssal Dwarves as they fight to prevent them from claiming an ancient weapon of power...

LORDS OF THE DEAD

Learn how to make your own Revenant and Apparition Bosses for Undead units in your Dungeon Saga games, including combining them with other monsters to create Skeletal Dragons and Ethereal Demons…

THE GCPS

With these rules, you can now run your GCPS units in your Deadzone games and campaigns, and help retake the worlds for the Corporations...

AND MUCH MORE!